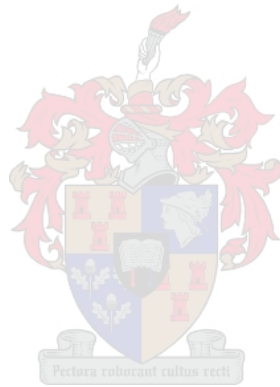


CRAFTING ANTI-STEREOTYPES:  
CREATING SPACE FOR CRITICAL ENGAGEMENT THROUGH ART

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## Abstract

Xenophobia and Afrophobia attacks in South Africa and the corresponding reactions of African countries to these discriminatory and stereotypical perceptions of foreigners remain in the news. This study provides a timely contribution to the discourse on these phobias by highlighting the impact of discrimination in the school environment.

The Botswana Government, as many other African governments, values multiculturalism in schools and officially supports an educational system that encourages a tolerance for diversity among people. However, the results from this study point towards learners' and teachers' intolerance for diversity and the other.

Within this context, the aim of this study was to explore visual arts in a school in Botswana's South East Region as a tool for learners to negotiate social and cultural meanings and to inform understandings of the self. Accordingly, the main research question was to explore the extent to which art processes can facilitate safe spaces for learners to openly engage in dialogue about stereotypes and discrimination.

A qualitative approach to research was used for this study and a case study design was conducted through a process of using various methods of data collection that obtained a holistic and meaningful understanding of 75 learners' real-life circumstances. Interpretive analysis was used to gain insight into the nature of the impact of social, political and historical contexts at school on the ways in which learners navigate their spaces of learning in a world of difference.

The data revealed that learners were exposed to various forms of discrimination, or were themselves discriminating against others. These behaviour types manifested mainly as acts of bullying, which were mostly aimed at stereotypical views of tribal features that included both physical features such as skin colour and cultural features such as language. In this regard, tribal discrimination is similar to racial discrimination and reflects the ingrained mindsets left behind by colonialism. Discrimination furthermore occurred in terms of social class and

income as well as sexual orientation. Accordingly, stereotyping was outlined as a technique used to discriminate against the other.

Through carefully chosen art projects that encouraged reflection and collaboration, the art classroom accommodated victimised learners and the art processes facilitated engagement to express visually and/or verbally what has been unsaid or hidden. Art practices enabled a safe space for marginalised voices by creating a meeting place for two opposing processes: between rigid judgements associated with stereotypes on the one hand and ongoing, non-judging engagement on the other hand. The anticolonial and postcolonial perspectives that were introduced helped all learners to uncover social and institutional injustices. To this end, social justice education with specific reference to the role that art pedagogies can play is shown as a necessary stepping stone towards multicultural education and towards change that will dismantle the discriminatory hierarchical structures in schools in order to enable more equal opportunities for all learners.

Keywords: art education; stereotypes; multiculturalism; social justice; critical engagement; diversity

## Opsomming

Xenofobiese en Afrofobiese aanvalle in Suid-Afrika en die gevolglike reaksies van Afrikalande op hierdie diskriminerende en stereotipiese persepsies van buitelanders is steeds in die nuus. Hierdie studie bied 'n tydige bydrae tot die diskoers oor hierdie fobies deur klem te lê op die impak van diskriminasie in die skoolomgewing.

Die Botswana-regering, soos talle ander Afrikaregerings, heg waarde aan multikulturalisme in skole en ondersteun amptelik 'n onderwysstelsel wat verdraagsaamheid van diversiteit ondermense aanmoedig. Die resultate van hierdie studie toon egter op leerders en onderwysers se onverdraagsaamheid teenoor diversiteit en mekaar.

In hierdie konteks was die doel van hierdie studie om visuele kuns in 'n skool in Botswana se suidoostelike streek te ondersoek as 'n instrument vir leerders om sosiale en kulturele betekenis te bewerkstellig en begrip van die self te rig. Die hoofnavorsingsvraag was gevolglik om die mate waarin kunsprosesse ruimtes vir leerders kan fasiliteer waarin hulle openlik aan dialoog oor stereotipes en diskriminasie kan deelneem, te ondersoek.

'n Kwalitatiewe navorsingsbenadering is vir die studie gebruik en 'n gevallestudie-ontwerp is uitgevoer deur verskeie data-insamelingsmetodes om holistiese en betekenisvolle begrip te verkry van 75 leerders se werklike omstandighede. Interpretatiewe ontleding is gebruik om insig te verkry in die aard van die impak van sosiale, politieke en historiese kontekste by die skool op die maniere waarop leerders hul leerruimtes in 'n wêreld van verskille navigeer.

Die data het getoon dat leerder aan verskeie vorme van diskriminasie blootgestel is, of self teen ander diskrimineer. Hierdie soorte gedrag het as afknouing gemanifesteer, wat hoofsaaklik gerig was op stereotipiese sienings van stam-kenmerke wat sowel fisiese eienskappe soos velkleur as kulturele eienskappe soos taal ingesluit het. In hierdie opsig is stam-diskriminasie soortgelyk aan rassediskriminasie wat die ingewortelde geestelike ingesteldhede wat deur kolonialisme nagelaat is, weerspieël. Diskriminasie het voorts voorgekom rakende sosiale klas en inkomste asook seksuele oriëntasie. Stereotipering word vervolgens beskryf as 'n tegniek wat gebruik word om teen die ander te diskrimineer.

Deur sorgvuldig gekose kunsprojekte wat besinning en samewerking aanmoedig, het die kunsklaskamer geviktimiseerde leerders tegemoetgekom en die kunsprosesse het betrokkenheid in die hand gewerk om visueel en/of verbaal uitdrukking te gee aan dít wat onuitgesproke of versteek is. Kunspraktyke het 'n veilige ruimte vir gemarginaliseerde stemme gebied deur 'n ontmoetingsplek vir twee teenstellende prosesse te skep: tussen streng veroordelings geassosieer met stereotipes aan die een kant en voortgesette, onbevooroordeelde betrokkenheid aan die ander kant. Die antikoloniale en postkoloniale perspektiewe wat bekendgestel is, het al die leerders gehelp om sosiale en institusionele ongeregtighede oop te vlek. Met dié doel word klem gelê op sosiale geregtigheid-onderwys met spesifieke verwysing na die rol wat kunspedagogieë kan speel as 'n noodsaaklike middel tot multikulturele onderwys en verandering wat die diskriminerende hiërargiese strukture in skole kan afbreek ten einde meer gelyke geleenthede vir alle leerders te verseker.

Sleutelwoorde: kunsonderwys; stereotipes; multikulturalisme; sosiale geregtigheid; kritiese betrokkenheid; diversiteit

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*KE A LEBOGA BETSHO!*

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## Chapter 1: Orientation to the study

### 1.1 Introduction

In a world of difference, discrimination “not only resides in external social institutions and norms, but lodges in the human psyche” (Bell, 2007:4). Social and cultural differences as well as political and economic inequalities cause a hierarchy of nationality, which eventually create a hierarchy of power relations within a society. As such, it makes some individuals and dominant groups maintain social control and exercise privileges and affirm their rights more than others. Tribal identities and affiliations in some instances appear to be stronger when individuals “have a strong desire to retain their identities... [:] others may assert pride in their cultural group and emphasize solidarity” rather than national identities, as “a way of dealing with negative attitudes” (Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind & Vedder, 2001:494). Schools in multi-tribal communities “are inherently political in the constitution of their ideologies and understandings of diversity (Basu, 2011:1309) as they are influenced and operate within a specific social and economic context that is embedded within a political orientation. As Basu (2011:1307) notes, “[s]chool spaces are imbued with meaning and foster sensibilities of justice, belonging and identity from an early beginning”. The reflection of past and present social hierarchies and experiences that exist in schools can lead to some learners being bullied or discriminated against as they negotiate their learning spaces (Okechukwu, Souza, Davis & de Castro, 2014). Yet, “aside from their educational mandate, schools are ideal places for neighbourhood integration” (Basu, 2011:1310). They are also places “where social and cultural differences are explored, negotiated and compromised in multiple ways” (Moahi & Costandius, 2018:19). These institutions provide critical social experiences that contribute to learners’ maturity.

The multi-ethnic and linguistic diversity of schools requires us to consider every group as uniquely different and significant in its own right, as learners face being discriminated against because of individual circumstances and due to beliefs about their physical appearances or ethnic identity (Okechukwu et al., 2014). Given the persistence of bias and discrimination against historically marginalised learners and the implications for their well-being and educational achievement, the primary goal of this investigation was firstly to armour learners

against the negative effects through the employment of art making to address and challenge cultural stereotypes, bullying and discrimination – something I also experienced as a naturalised citizen of Botswana and during my undergraduate studies at Stellenbosch University. It secondly explored critical and inclusive citizenship in the teaching and learning school environment. Critical citizenship and inclusive citizenship are based on the critical ability to understand, live and practise collective values such as “tolerance, diversity, human rights, democracy and social justice” (Costandius, 2012:6). The complex processes involved in community engagement can potentially facilitate critical citizenship education and make its aims tangible through lived experience.

Nations today find themselves with a citizenry that belongs to what Held (2001, cited in Osler & Starkey, 2003:246) calls “overlapping communities of fate: local, regional, national, international and increasingly virtual”. This serves to continually perpetuate division and inequality in the sociocultural fabric of the school and village at large. Educators must be aware of the significance of opening up safe spaces that give learners the freedom and security to be vulnerable and self-explore without fear of judgement. According to Alesina, Devleeschauwer, Easterly, Kurlat and Wacziarg (2003:181), Botswana “has relatively low ethnic diversity for Africa”. It has a diverse culture and has a variety of tribes<sup>1</sup>. Yet, as a nation, Botswana has had a thriving multiparty democracy, harmony and stability for the last fifty-three years, which it continues to enjoy. Good (2009:850) notes that “the government has officially portrayed Botswana over decades as ethnically homogeneous”. As a colony protected and ruled by the British, the country was called the ‘Bechuanaland Protectorate’ (Lubinda, 2010), “underscoring that it is ‘the land of the Tswana-speaking peoples’ and thus giving a semblance of linguistically and ethnic homogeneity” (Lubinda, 2010:124). Despite conjuring the feeling that only the Tswana people occupy the land (Mulimbi & Dryden-Peterson, 2018), in reality, more than 20 linguistically diverse ethnic groups can be found within Botswana (Dryden-Peterson & Mulimbi, 2016; Nyati-Ramahobo, 2006). Therefore, despite the “superficial impression that a casual observer may have of a so-called mono-ethnic and mono-cultural society” (Lubinda, 2010:121), the politics of belonging is gradually

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<sup>1</sup> Under colonial rule the term tribe described a “Tswana-ruled proto-state” which were later converted to Reserves and this description are still used in post-independent Botswana. Tribe translates to *morafe* - a kingdom or chiefdom, or an ethnic group (Bennett, 2002:10-12), a definition which is used in this thesis. The Botswana Constitution recognizes eight “major tribes” who share the common language, Setswana (Mulimbi & Dryden-Peterson, 2018). (See also chapter 2.3 National context)

becoming more noticeable as the marginalised and minority groups begin to fight for their rights, cultural recognition and plurality, which is frequently disputed by dominant groups' "efforts to maintain the status quo of an inherited colonial hierarchy of ethnic groupings" (Nyamnjoh, 2002:755). In schools, the issue of tribal groupings and demographic size often plays out in a power struggle, especially amongst those who consider themselves to be superior to the marginalised who find themselves within the playgrounds of schools and in classrooms.

Following carefully-planned art lesson plans that are learner centred, learners can cultivate and develop skills, principles and attitudes necessary for successful learning in school and life beyond. Through art making, "whether changes occur gradually through modifications to learning dispositions, pleasure in making something worthwhile or, more radically, through an 'illuminating experiences' or a 'traumatic experience'" (Addison, 2010:7), the experience and process becomes valuable. Within the environment of art participation, people find new ways to think about and look at the situations they might find themselves in and open up new avenues to approach any challenges that exist in a multicultural diverse society (Wesley, 2007). Jones (1999:3) posits that art "destabilize[s] fixed ideas and existing identities" as well as "help us move into a different space where different rules apply". The arts, writes Maxine Greene (1995; Greene & Lincoln, 2001), have the distinct power to open our imagination to the unimagined and the uncertain. In this case, the processes of art making can alter ways in which individuals view the world around them (Tladi & Makombe, 2017) and the products produced or found, as well as the way they think about themselves. Greene (1995) informs us that art enables and forces people to experience a new world view through creative imagination. Art practices can provide a platform that opens up spaces to negotiate and remove social constructs of inequalities and injustices brought about during the tribal wars and colonial period – a period that promoted hierarchies in society that rank people based on their cultural and physical difference. Art can attempt to afford opportunities through educating both the oppressed and the oppressors through art education. This can involve planned discussion about multi-ethnic and multiracial content material or exploration of socio-political events to make a mural or a collage, for instance.

Creative thinking in art "can facilitate with the exploration of emotional associations and can influence the way individuals feel and think about an issue" (Moahi & Costandius, 2018:33).

It was through art that I could experiment with and experience other people's points of view or philosophy, and I came to identify traits I shared with people from multiracial backgrounds as a student in a foreign country (Wesley, 2007). This became the foundation and "source material for critical reflection on multicultural diversity" (Wesley, 2007:18), a platform to express and explore issues of displacement and cultural shock which I found myself in during my studies at university in South Africa. It afforded me the personal space to reflect critically, as well as express myself through a variety of art media and art making processes without fear of judgement. This became a starting point to research the use of art as a research tool to explore and discuss one's philosophy and way of life in a world of diversity. Art plays a role in transforming people's thinking skills, either assisting to face and change circumstances or acknowledge beliefs deep-seated in a community dealing with societal, ethnic and political matters.

## **1.2 Describing the problem**

My curiosity was roused by my own experiences as an under-graduate and then master's student at a university in the Western Cape. There, I began thinking of including crucial concepts such as critical pedagogy in teaching and learning in the syllabus because I recognised the intricacies associated with uniting learners from different cultural backgrounds in a classroom or school setup. Many educational institutions now accept learners from various cultural and national backgrounds due to globalisation and urban migration of families from different parts of the world. This diversity means that educators need to prepare for diverse learner populations with a variety of personal practices stemming from various social classes, languages and cultural backgrounds. With *culture* I am denoting "the ways of seeing, thinking, speaking, believing and behaving that characterise the members of a social or ethnic group" (Abdi, Puplampu & Dei, 2006:5). In educational settings, the ethos that is practised in schools mirrors the beliefs and values of the governing members of society (Abdi & Cleghorn, 2005). At the junior secondary school where I teach, the Batswana learners come from numerous tribal groups found in Botswana. Added to that are international learners from Africa and abroad. Since schools are built and operate within a specific political and cultural context, they are not resistant to the governmental pressure of the wider community. The discrimination regularly enacted within the civic realm of a community also plays out in the school grounds. The attitudes among the diverse cultural and



national groups – foreigners included – in the communities and schools, reflect those of superiority versus inferiority amongst the dominant and minority tribal groups as well as amongst foreign nationals.

Visual art was examined in this research as a platform to discuss social constructs and meaning constructed on a national level that could lead to a better understanding of self. In the art studio – “where art, identity and culture are intricately linked – racially and culturally responsive teaching plays a critical role” in the way that learners “come to understand cultural diversity, social inclusion and antiracist behaviours” (Moahi & Costandius, 2018:19). In order to reduce discrimination against learners because of where they come from, there is a need to investigate the extent to which art processes could enable opening up of safe spaces to discuss concepts such as stereotypes and bullying through dialogue. I started asking myself whether art making could afford me the opportunity to generate lessons that help learners explore discrimination, marginalisation and oppression directed towards marginalised groups in society.

Stereotyping continues to be a “powerful, and pervasive element affecting group behaviour” (Beeman & Volk, 1996:299) in society and has become entrenched in society’s beliefs as an acceptable reason for discriminating against anyone considered different. Individuals, therefore, take for granted negative beliefs that have become part of their traditional beliefs as common sense, even if proven to be untrue. Dialogue, as Hajhosseiny (2012:1359) contends, can “make it possible to take the perspective of others into account, which is necessary for ‘the assessment of truth claims’”. Moore (2006:36) posits that “individuals acquire stereotypes from society’s major institutions such as the family, peer groups, schools, churches, and the media”. It is thus crucial to realise that “education is a part of society. It is not something alien, something that stands outside. Indeed, it is a key set of institutions and a key set of social and personal relations” (Apple, 2008:252). These social relations “create cognitive structures and thought processes fostered by people more capable in their thinking, for example parents and teachers” (Dreyer & Singh, 2016:248).

In this instance, schooling can be viewed as a “political act [...] transforming schools towards pursuing social justice [and] using education to engender social change” (Johnson & Morris,

2010:80). The type of learning discussed above can help learners develop capabilities to become fully functional citizens that take part in the processes of decision making for the betterment of their lives; it clearly “plays a key social role in the formation of identities” (Apple, 2013:20) as they learn to deal with power relations “with the emotional labour both of managing one’s presentation of self and of being with others who are both the same and different” (Apple, 2013:20). Accordingly, this research sought to explore how art can be used as a process in discovering one’s way to negotiate and explore one’s world view and way of life, in changing people’s cognitive thinking processes, either helping to confront and alter personal experiences or recognise customs deep-seated in a community grappling with political and tribal injustices. It is the result of our collective thinking as human beings, whether good or bad, that is multifaceted yet that is often left unspoken. It is often the understated mannerism in discussions, unconscious labelling or engrained beliefs that trigger conflict in such a multi-tribal and diverse society.

### **1.3 Study aim, research question and research objectives**

The aim of this study was to explore visual arts in a school in Botswana’s South East Region as a tool for learners to negotiate social and cultural meanings and inform understandings of self.

The research question formulated was: To what extent can art processes facilitate safe spaces to openly engage in dialogue about stereotypes and discrimination?

The objectives of this study included to:

- identify the responses of learners to projects designed to create safe spaces to openly participate in dialogue about stereotypes and discrimination in a case study at a community junior secondary school in Botswana’s South East Region;
- investigate visual art as a learning platform to elicit creative imagination and encourage learners in their expressions to describe themselves and their experiences; and
- establish what the responses revealed about their state of mind and understanding of self.

#### **1.4 Overview of the methodology**

The investigation followed an interpretive approach to explore ways to discuss stereotypes and discrimination at a junior secondary school in Botswana's South East Region. This method affords personal insight into the intricacy of the practises of those who have lived it (Schwandt, 1994). It enables the understanding of people's experiences as accrued through shared ideas consisting of language, perception, shared values, tools, records and other art pieces (Klein & Myers, 1999). Various conflicts, misunderstandings, misrepresentations and prejudices of stories are engendered and as such a socially fashioned viewpoint would help in understanding it (Klein & Meyers, 1999). Critical arguments must therefore be made accessible to convey and challenge prejudice, rather than simply relying on numerical evidence (Garcia & Quek, 1997).

Taking into consideration the traditional and social background of the study problem, a qualitative investigation approach was employed for the research. A qualitative approach centres mainly on the significance of processes, actual settings and meaning that cannot be recognised by only investigating or measuring them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008a). It is fitting in the sense that action "can be best understood when it is observed in the setting in which it occurs", augmented by the "understanding of the experience that is gained by being on location" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998:4–5). Quantitative studies are seen as less effective, due to their nature of placing emphasis on evaluating and studying the causal connections between variables and not the processes (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008b). A qualitative approach, moreover, investigates the "socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008b:14). This has the capabilities to encompass the many intricacies within the research by augmenting it with both experiential data and theory. The implications of this research could impact the development of a diversity and citizenship education programme in school contexts.

A case study research design was used to explore the challenges found in schools using several data collection methods including written reflections, artworks and semi-structured

interviews with learners from multicultural backgrounds at the school. Case study research is an experiential investigation that “comprises an all-encompassing method – covering the logic of design, data collection techniques and specific approaches to data analysis” (Yin, 2014:17). Collecting data that are comprehensive and insightful through interviewing methods and informal discussions may possibly afford essential understanding of the numerous intricacies that need to be investigated within this area of study. The data according to Patton (2002:4)

[g]row out of three kinds of data collection: (1) in-depth, open- ended interviews; (2) direct observation; and (3) written documents. Interviews yield direct quotations from people about their experiences, opinions, feelings, and knowledge. The data from observations consist of detailed descriptions of people's activities ... Document analysis includes studying excerpts, quotations ... personal diaries; and open-ended written.

The main source of data collection was from reflections written by the learners, as well as semi-structured interviews which were conducted. Class observations formed part of the data collection methodology during the research period. Inductive content investigation was used for the data analysis. Seventy-five Art learners in the school formed the research sample. I investigated all the learners in the department, but then focused on and interviewed only those whose parents signed the consent form. The intention of the study is specifically not to generalise, but to offer an in-depth investigation of the learners’ experiences that became evident during the study. In this study, an arts-based approach was also used. Arts-based approaches involve collecting data from “researcher-made art, participant-made art, or a combination of the two (Leavy, 2017:209). McNiff defines art-based research as a “method of inquiry which uses elements of creative art ... as a way of understanding the significance of what we do with our practice” (McNiff, 1998:13). The art pieces made become the data. Art (visual art in this instance) can “provide a way to reach people in their deepest areas of self: their creative drive and their ‘desire’” (Lachman-Chapin, 2002). Methodologically, arts-based approaches “open to the unexpected—to surprises, new insights, and bends in the road” (Leavy, 2017:191).

Open coding was employed as method to examine the data collected. Open coding is the method of “breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing and categorizing data” (Punch, 2000:106). The purpose of open coding is the development of themes. These themes,

collected through the various methods from the participant, may then be developed into topics that can be further examined. A detailed and comprehensive description of the research design is discussed in Chapter 4.

## **1.5 Structure of the thesis**

A brief summary of the chapters that comprise this thesis is as follows:

Chapter 1 contains the introduction to the research and the background to the study. My experience to and inspiration for the study are provided to affirm my perception and place within the study. The study aim, research question and study objectives are also provided in this chapter.

In order to understand how art can be utilised to discuss injustices and prejudice that are found in a multi-ethnic and multinational society such as Botswana, Chapter 2 presents a contextual backdrop to the research in which the study was positioned. It offers the historical setting of the marginalised tribes in Botswana and in the world.

Chapter 3 provides the theoretical framework of the study, with multicultural education and social justice as the overarching theoretical framework used in the study. Theories of decolonisation and art as pedagogy are also explored. The theoretical framework of the study contains aspects of colonialism, postcolonial theory and anti-colonialism to highlight the influence of an inherited history of hierarchical groupings.

Chapter 4 sets out the research methodology employed in this study. A case study design was deemed appropriate and inductive content analysis was employed for data analysis. Reflections written by participants were the major source of data, whilst reflective processes that were accompanied by note taking, semi-structured interviews and art processes and art projects were considered as well. The data obtained is discussed according to the projects with reference to the theoretical framework explained in Chapter 3.

Chapter 5 provides a summary of the results of the data collected in this research. Data is presented within the themes that emerged during the research period. An analysis of the results follows the presentation of the data.

Chapter 6 presents a discussion of the results and implications of the data that was collected in this research.

Chapter 7 concludes the study description with deductions as well as discussion of implications of the research results. It closes with some suggestions that may be significant and of value in other fields.

A brief overview and orientation of the study was discussed in this chapter including the research design and paradigm. With migration across cities, villages and nations on the rise; schools are increasingly becoming diverse. There is need to find a way to open up spaces for critical dialogue about social hierarchies that occur within a school with a socio-culturally diverse student body. As such, the main aim of this research study is to explore visual arts in a school in Botswana's South East Region as a tool for learners to negotiate social and cultural meanings and inform understandings of self. The background context of the study is further elaborated in chapter 2 below, to give a better understanding of the study.

## Chapter 2: Contextualising the study

### 2.1 The concept of 'ethnicity'

Ethnic homogeneity is certainly a part of Botswana's wider reputation for being a democratic country in Africa. However, Tswana people have been culturally diverse from precolonial times (Schapera, 1952). The social and cultural classification of Botswana is not determined by peoples' racial affiliation, but nonetheless, the racial classification is used to introduce some order into the complex ethnic situation in African society today. The people of Africa have continually migrated and intermingled and consequently created heterogeneous groups with diverse social aspirations and interests. In terms of ethnicity and ethnic boundaries, the colonial order created borders without taking into account the ethnic and cultural composition of the African inhabitants.

Ethnic borders in Africa, as noted by Berman, Eyoh, and Kymlicka, (2004:3), "are not atavistic, primordial survivals of archaic primitive cultures" but a colonial creation, "a by-product of African encounters with capitalism and the nation-state in the colonial" and post-colonial eras. The colonial rule only considered the material interests of the empire at the expense of the natural development of African societies (Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2001). Initially, distinct, but eventually joining processes combined to create ethnic groups found in most African states today. The first trajectory of social relations was created due to crises or encounters during tribal wars of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century that were a result of migration or the nomadic lifestyles found in Africa. For Botswana, the *difaqane* wars in the early 19th century were significant in terms of the process to create social groups because a large percentage of southern Africa's people fought as various tribes were in a process to realign socially and politically (Wilmsen, 2002). Marks (1982), highlights the flexibility of political frontiers in the area at the period where leaders (usually kings or chiefs) and societies fought to secure control over people. In these situations, "ethnicity was of relatively little significance" (Wilmsen, 2002:826). Ethnicity at this stage referred to the historically created traditions about "group identity associations" that "were in practice as well as in ideology" (Wilmsen, 2002:826). The kingdoms during the precolonial Africa had borderlines, not boundaries. "Bounded territories were a colonial invention, which created clearly demarcated units of administration, ended the ambiguities of sovereignty in buffer zones and placed formerly autonomous communities under paramount chiefs" (Werbner, 2002:674), ending the uncertainties of dominant kingdoms that

had been established in the earlier wars or hunting-herding eras. In essence, the colonial policy aimed to fragment powerful precolonial ethnicities and languages so that “through colonial imposition, the culture, language, and religion of the empire would replace the indigenous languages, religious practices, and cultural forms” (Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2006:57). The outcomes of indigenous societies’ continuous encounters with the administrative running and cultural values of the West “played a key role in the construction of ‘tribal’ identities out of earlier kinship groups and political units, building upon indigenous power relations” (Berman et al. 2004:5), established during the tribal wars.

Ethnicity was not a simple descriptive term, but a colonial code for a relationship of domination and subordination between colonisers and colonised. Ethnicity represented an important card in political mobilisation. Colonial powers sought to distance and contain tribes or natives within the nation-states, creating new disputes within kingdoms and making ethnicity an arena of conflict over the moral and material alienations of class formation that threatened established relations of indigenous moral economies (Berman et al. 2004).

This is not to say that precolonial African societies did not have diverse conflicting identities or differences that could lead to tribal wars (Hagg & Kagwanja, 2007); rather, it was “the absence of the elevation and politicization of a single identity – ethnicity, clan, gender or age gap” that changed when colonial rule was established in Africa (Hagg & Kagwanja, 2007:15). Africans belonged naturally to tribes and the colonisers meticulously demarcated the borders that divided the various tribes into units that were eventually called nation states or districts during the scramble for Africa (Ranger, 1983; Akyeampong, 2006b). By definition, a tribe was a “group with a shared origin, language, culture and territory; an inferior copy of the civilized European nation state” with an identity that overlapped neatly (Akyeampong, 2006b:313). Studies of precolonial Africa, as highlighted by Akyeampong (2006a), underscore the multiple identities Africans adhered to and the way in which membership of a clan or group bowed allegiance to a chief not confined within a defined territory. However, colonial governments insisted on a dealing to embrace tribes as platforms to access colonial resources. Mamdani (2002) argues that the creation of ethnicity turned race and tribe into fixed denominators in the colonial project. The colonial rule drove a wedge between ethnic groups and created hierarchies by granting higher statuses to certain identity groups through appointments of local authorities or governmental staff in the colonial offices (Akyeampong, 2006a; Hagg &



Kagwanja, 2007; Werbner, 2002). As Vail (1989:7) argues, “ethnicity is not a natural residue, but a consciously crafted ideological creation”. Vail (1989) and Akyeampong (2006b) credit missionaries with the role they played in the creation of ethnicity. Missionaries composed the first grammars of vernacular languages, produced written versions of tribal histories and trained the first Africans who became cultural brokers.

To summarise, ethnicity became “the axil to the colonial divide and rule device used for the purpose of political control” (Hagg & Kagwanja, 2007:15). Most of the postcolonial states therefore inherited what Hagg and Kagwanja (2007:15–16) refer to as “ethnic stereotypes and divisive patterns of power between and within specific ethnic identities”, which propagated conflict. It is often said that states in Africa are ‘artificial’ and that the borders were drawn without much attention to the historical identities and beliefs and values of the people who lived in them. The colonial borders divided tribes and left them on both sides of international boundaries; for example, “this divided Kalanga: some fell in Botswana, others in Zimbabwe” (Werbner, 2002:674). The consequences of these borders in many nation-states therefore play out in a “range of widely varying exclusionary and discriminatory processes and practices” (Solway, 2002:720). Most African states have and continue to witness the rise of many culturally-based groups or societies, which play a critical role in destabilising narratives (Solway, 2002). For the vast majority of contemporary Africans, basic security depends on ethnicity, which also has a strong influence on their conceptions of selfhood and social belonging (Lamont & Molnar, 2002).

## **2.2 Global context**

The gaps that exist between marginalised and dominant groups and the language rights of immigrants and marginalised groups are among the unresolved and contentious issues with which nations in a global world must grapple today. Multicultural democratic nation-states deal with several significant issues with regard to “paradigms and ideologies as their populations become more culturally, racially, ethnically and linguistically diverse” (Banks, 2016:74). Responses to migration are intricately linked to the demarcation of borders and hence separate citizenships. In urban areas, educators are challenged by a student body of increasing racial, class and gender diversity. Despite their diverse cultural beliefs,

communities are linked together not because they come from the same country, but rather because they live in the same neighbourhood or share religious beliefs.

Issues of belonging, identity and citizenship are becoming important as diverse tribes begin to fight for their cultural and language rights amidst the efforts by those in power to keep “the status quo of an inherited colonial hierarchy of ethnic groupings... informed by colonial registers of inequalities among the subjected” (Nyamnjoh, 2006:82). Today, the issue of the composition of a society of nation, its size and numbers frequently turn into power hierarchy battles especially between the oppressed and those in power (Boikhutso & Jotia, 2013). This development can be compared to the greater understanding of the differences that exist between ‘locals’ and ‘foreigners’, especially regarding job opportunities and privileges (Nyamnjoh, 2006). Henceforth, the reason why national diversities that prevail in Africa today continue to be recognised as the main contributing factor to the escalating violent conflicts that ravage through the continent (Hagg & Kagwanja, 2007), Takayama, Sriprakash and Connell (2016:3) posit that

[t]he idea of cultural and social difference itself has roots in the colonial division of the world, which played a formative role for the social and educational sciences created in the global metropole. Such a critical perspective has been put forward by education scholars who draw on postcolonial theory.<sup>2</sup>

The taken-for-granted African cultural belief and value systems are, according to Banégas (2006) and Bayart (2005), a contemporary by-product or creation by the colonizers and/or the postcolonial successors who have since inherited the political structures of the colonial period. The colonial powers’ influence over ethnic identities left Africa split into two camps: that of settler and native groups. Thus, Africa continues to grapple with the disparities established during the colonial years. As Hagg and Kagwanja (2007:11) put it, “[a]t the heart of the African crisis is the failure to bring identities to the centre of democratisation and institution-building processes, both before and after conflict”. As the late Kofi Annan said during his tenure as the United Nations secretary-general, “the sources of conflict in Africa reflect ... diversity and complexity” (1998, quoted in Hagg & Kagwanja, 2007:10).

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<sup>2</sup> See also Hoffman (1999), Tikly (2004) and Baker (2012).

The numerous tribal identities with similar yet unique differences continue to be attributed as the source of the violent attacks experienced in most African nations today (Hagg & Kagwanja, 2007). In contemporary Africa – as elsewhere – “such identities as Tutsi, Croats or Hindu have appeared armour-plated in deadly combats of civilizations that have mirrored Samuel Huntington’s clash of civilisations on a global scale” (Hagg & Kagwanja, 2007:10,). While cultural identity differences do not always incite clashes, these differences have become in recent events one of the causes that is attributed to violent attacks that are cutting across most African nations. As Hagg and Kagwanja (2007:12) posit, Africa has become “a theatre of violent conflicts from Burundi to Liberia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo to Sierra Leone, Somalia, to Rwanda and Guinea to Sudan”. The current reasons for the new wars are attributed to the diverse nature of nation states that are linked to the politics of identity, especially ethnic identity that are coming forward today (Nyamnjoh, 2002). Some scholars credit violence (as a result of ethnic difference) in some nations as an expression of the inequalities and injustices of the colonial period; as well as the colonial manipulation of tribal identities in the past now resurfacing to trouble the postcolonial nations (Mamdani, 2001).

Cultures and societies are dynamic, not fixed. The boundaries that demarcated to form African states during the colonial period enforced new nationalities (Klotz, 2016), forming new communities which complicated questions of citizenship and the politics of belonging. Klotz (2016:182) posits that the boundaries “can be conceptualized as liminal in-between spaces through which the meanings of cultural and political authority are negotiated”. The new political and cultural identities of some of the tribes caused conflicts that led to violent attacks in countries as such as Nigeria, Cameroon, Kenya, Burundi and South Africa, especially “hostility faced by foreigners in post-apartheid South Africa, which often culminates in physical violence generally referred to as ‘xenophobic’” (Siziba, 2016:124).

Xenophobia – “the intense dislike, hatred or fear of others perceived to be strangers – has intensified with globalisation” (Nyamnjoh, 2006:5). For Botswana, although it has not culminated in physical violence, xenophobia is usually articulated through “the deep dislike of non-nationals, based on fear of the unknown or anything perceived as different” (Morapedi, 2007:231), especially the dislike of black African foreigners commonly referred to

as *makwerekwere*<sup>3</sup>. Siziba (2016:124) contends that in most instances it is the “Black bodies that are constructed and rendered the strange and illegal [who] are targets” for various forms of exclusion and verbal abuse. Victims “are targeted for their very blackness by a society where skin colour” was used as justification to discriminate against and marginalise those perceived as different during the colonial period (Nyamnjoh, 2006:49). Postliberation xenophobia thus continues to haunt many of the southern African countries. McDonald and Jacobs (2005:300-3001) contend that, “[t]he harshest anti-immigrant sentiments are expressed by the citizens of South Africa, Namibia and Botswana, the anti-foreign ‘troika’”. However, Crush & Pendleton (2004) assert that although Zimbabweans and Mozambicans hold negative attitudes towards foreigners, they are considered to be more tolerant of foreign nationals living in their countries. The attitudes emanate from “competitive rather than co-operative” negative interactions between diverse nations (Nnoli, 1995:1). Nyamnjoh (2006:101) posits that the black foreigners in Botswana, like in many other African countries, are “most vulnerable to question and revision by the locals, as compared to Asians or whites, in that order”, with Zimbabweans being “the most contested and most devalued by locals who perceive them ‘as monsters taking over Batswana jobs and depriving them of the right of enjoying the comfort of their wealth’”. Zimbabweans are looked down upon and are more likely to become “victims of police harassment, public prejudice, stereotyping and debasement” (Nyamnjoh, 2002:768). Morapedi (2007) states that in Botswana there is not a general fear of foreigners, but a fear of black foreigners, as well as a nationalistic problem weaved into the xenophobic problem. The nationalistic problem is discussed in more detail in the next section.

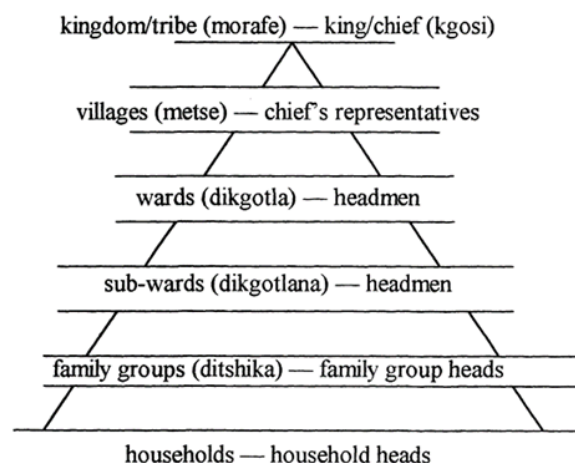
### 2.3 National context

In Botswana, ethnicity and belonging was almost overlooked as the government upheld the notion of a nation while really only endorsing the values of dominant Tswana tribes and democratic institutions (Nyamnjoh, 2002). There has been “a resurgence of identity politics

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<sup>3</sup> It is a term used “to mock foreigners’ unintelligible tongues, [and] has become shorthand for African aliens-provides a convenient ‘other’: not only a scapegoat for crime, disease and unemployment, but a visible, physical reminder of difference” (Mathers & Landau, 2007:526). Stereotypically in Botswana, “the more dark-skinned a person is, the more likely s/he is to pass for *Makwerekwere*, especially if s/he is inarticulate in Setswana. Bakalanga, who tend to be more dark-skinned than the rest, are also more at risk of being labelled *Makwerekwere* (Nyamnjoh, 2006:244). As a derogatory term, “the phantom of *Makwerekwere*” was “constructed in and through public discourse to render Africans from outside the borders orderable as the nation’s bogeyman” (Matsinhe, 2011:295).

and overt tensions on the question of belonging, as minority ethnic groups seek equity, better representation and more access to national resources and opportunities” (Nyamnjoh, 2002:755). During the 1890s, the British “colonial rule in Bechuanaland<sup>4</sup> oversaw a transformation of the Protectorate” (Wilmsen, 2002:829). A Tswana kingdom that had risen to power during the *difaqane* wars, became more powerful under the British colonial rule and “gained ascendancy not only over non-Tswana minority peoples but also over peripheral branches of its own linguistic affiliate” (Wilmsen, 2002:829). The Tswana groups “displaced, absorbed or subjugated the rest of the ethnic groups when they first established themselves” (Bennett, 2002:5). Although the colonizers were not responsible for the tribal differences that existed during the pre-colonial period, the “colonial political and juridical discourse upheld at the least, and exacerbated at the most, the pre-colonial ethno-cultural dispensation” (Mafela, 2014:429), thereby giving more power and dominance to the Tswana ethno-cultural tribes over the non-Tswana minority people (Nyati-Ramahobo, 2008).



**Figure 2.1: The Botswana traditional political-administrative system (Helle-Valle, 2002:181)**

This dominance also had a class basis. “Khoisan<sup>5</sup>-speaking peoples were subordinated as a secondary labour reserve consigned to foraging, from which they could be drawn to work on cattle posts as needed” (Wilmsen, 2002:829). During that time both the Bantu-speaking people and Khoisan-speaking peoples were trade partners with the same political and economic power rights and common understanding (Wilmsen, 2002). The Khoisan people were mostly hunter-gatherers and traded in game products (Bennett, 2002). Eventually the

<sup>4</sup> The Bechuanaland Protectorate consisted of eight major tribal reserves, with freehold blocks allocated to the settlers.

<sup>5</sup> The Khoisan were the earliest inhabitants in Botswana, who were later followed by the Bantu-speaking people (Bennett, 2002).

Khoisan were recognised as one homogeneous tribal group named Basarwa (Wilmsen, 2002) which became subordinated under the Tswana rule. This subordination was a result of political power hierarchies perpetuated by the colonisers. It was in this “intersection of divergent interests that indigenous and colonial European participative ideologies converged to create the class structure with its ethnic divisions found in Botswana today” (Wilmsen, 2002:829).

During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the inception of what is now the land and republic of Botswana, disrupted the precolonial tribal territories (Wilmsen, 2002). Fifty-five distinct indigenous groups speaking twenty-six languages can be found in Botswana together with about nine ethnic Khoisan groups that speak about twenty-three different languages and dialects. The remaining languages and ethnic groups are Bantu (Nyati-Ramahobo, 2002). Eight of the Bantu groups speak Setswana as their mother tongue. Hence are considered a majority group or ‘tribe’.<sup>6</sup> According to Nyati-Ramahobo (2002:17), “the use of the term minority and majority languages and ethnic groups in Botswana therefore bears no numerical significance”. It rather indicates who uses Setswana as a first language and who uses Setswana as a second language. Therefore, classification is somewhat about “marginalised vs non-marginalised linguistic and ethnic groups” (Nyati-Ramahobo, 2002:17). The Chieftainship Act (Republic of Botswana, 1966a, Cap. 41:01) states that ‘tribe’ refers to “the Bamangwato Tribe, the Batawana Tribe, Bakgatla Tribe, Bakwena Tribe, Bangwaketse Tribe, the Bamalete Tribe, Barolong Tribe, and Batlokwa Tribe.” The first president of Botswana, Sir Seretse Khama, in his address at a Teachers’ Union conference on 15 December 1969 said,

Likewise, all moves towards closer inter-tribal co-operation will be encouraged, such as, for instance, the organisation of all the tribal and other groups into local councils, into which smaller tribal units will be absorbed for their own economic benefit, even if they retain a small measure of tribal identity (Carter & Morgan 1980:303).

President, Sir Ketumile Masire, the then second president of the Republic of Botswana in 1989, asked the citizens of Botswana

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<sup>6</sup> The term is used to denote an ethnic group or *morafe* in the sense of a state or chiefdom; it can also be used in the sense of a territorial and political unit (Bennett, 2002:11).

...not to spoil the prevailing peace and unity in the country by fighting for ethnic language groupings to take precedence over Setswana, and that tribes insisting that their languages become media of instruction within their respective areas would break up the nation (Botswana Daily News, 30 June 1989:1, quoted in Nyati-Ramahobo 2000:266).

The former president, the late Sir Seretse Khama, informed Batswana that his party “stands for a gradual but sure evolution of a nation state ...to which tribal groups will, while in existence, take secondary place” (Carter & Morgan, 1980: 291).

The country was divided into eight districts namely the Kgalagadi, Ghanzi, Kweneng, Central, Ngwaketse, Kgatleng, Ngamiland (Northwest) and South East District. In these eight districts in which the majority are Tswana<sup>7</sup>-speaking groups, the district name given was named after the tribal group that is dominant in that district. According to The Chieftainship Act, (Republic of Botswana, 1966a), all other ethnic groups are absorbed into the tribal group they fall under in the various districts. As stipulated by The Tribal Territories Act (Republic of Botswana 1966c, Cap. 32. 03) the eight tribes as stated above “have the land rights and it is distributed under their jurisdiction within their territory” (Nyati-Ramahobo, 2002:18). This was a system that emerged during the colonial period in which

The British colonial government also recognised chiefs that came from the Setswana-speaking groups and ignored other tribal leaders. This helped to entrench the supremacy of Setswana speakers. All these factors contributed to a shift towards the use of Setswana, the language of the ruling class. Consequently, it was not surprising that at independence Setswana was easily recognised as a national language (Mooko 2006:111).

This has a great impact on how non-Tswana groups negotiate and define their traditional and cultural beliefs in the public spaces. While the Tswana have rights to land, they also enjoy the

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<sup>7</sup> Only the eight Setswana-speaking tribes (Bangwato, Bakwena, Balete, Bangwaketse, Batlokwa, Bakgatla, Barolong and Batawana) have designated and demarcated tribal territories and group land rights. For instance, Kgatleng District Council is in Mochudi village, where the Bakgatla reside, and the land governing body is the Kgatleng Land Board. Therefore, we have the Ngwato Land Board, the Tawana Land Board, the Ngwaketse Land Board and the Kweneng Land Board. The Balete and Batlokwa tribes reside in the South East District. By design or by default, this renders the other tribes ‘invisible’ on the national scene (Nyati-Ramahobo, 2002). Only the Setswana-speaking tribes may be represented in the House of Chiefs by chiefs with ex officio status and thereby ensure some permanence (Lubinda, 2010:128–29). In general, the Ba-/Mo- (singular/plural) prefix before the tribe name signifies the number of people being discussed, e.g. Bangwato refers to more than one person, while Mongwaketse refers to one person.

freedom to speak their language without fear of judgement. The precise status of non-Tswana groups differs, but it has been implied that “the main categories are commoners (such as Kalanga), foreigners (such as OvaHerero) and serfs (such as Basarwa and many Bakgalagari)” (Bennett, 2002:5).

Although Botswana celebrates diversity and sees it as an important and central part of Botswana identity, “those members of groups seen as ‘diverse’ are often framed as ‘the problem’, as lacking what is necessary to succeed in society, and as threats to the potential for social cohesion” (Eidoo, Ingram, MacDonald, Nabavi, Pashby, & Stille, 2011:66). There exists a hierarchy of citizenship “fostered by political, economic, social and cultural inequalities, such that it makes some individuals and groups much more able to claim and articulate their rights than others” (Nyamnjoh, 2006:85-86). Just because one carries a national identity card, it does not mean one experiences and exercises the same rights as all Batswana in the country. As Nyamnjoh posits,

Being a rights-bearing Motswana is a matter of degree and power relations, and some are less Batswana than others, even though they are armed with the same *Omong* (identity card) and inspired or protected by the same constitution (Nyamnjoh, 2006:86).

Even though every Motswana national can lay claims of being a citizen, others such as the BaKalanga<sup>8</sup> and the Bazezuru (total estimated population in Botswana of 11 000 people) (Lubinda, 2010), “are perceived in certain Tswana circles as less authentic citizens or locals. Indeed, they are presented as having more in common with *Makwerekwere* from Zimbabwe and further north, than with the other Batswana” (Nyamnjoh, 2002:761). Nationality and belonging, is but an imagined community as Anderson (1991) argues, most of what is believed to be true and a given – such as the cultural homogeneousness in order to promote unity in a country, tribal and language hierarchies, “and the assertion of ethnic difference and tribal identity in public life – is now being contested or renegotiated through effective compromise” (Werbner, 2002:120). Although Botswana can be counted as one of the “ethnically and

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<sup>8</sup> Stereotypically, the more dark-skinned a local is, the more likely he/she is to pass for a *makwerekwere*, especially if he/she is inarticulate in Setswana. BaKalanga and Bazezuru, who tend to be more dark-skinned than the rest, are also more at risk of being labelled *makwerekwere*. In general, the le-/ma- (singular/plural) prefix in Setswana usually designates someone as foreign, different or outside the community. It is not used just for ethnic groups, but for any group or profession that seems to be set apart from average folks (Nyamnjoh, 2002).



linguistically homogeneous countries within Africa” (Solway, 2002:714), Gladney (1998:1) posits that, “majorities are made, not born [...] numerically, ethnically, politically, and culturally, societies make and mark their majorities and minorities under specific historical, political, and social circumstances”. Thus, establishing which tribes are the majority in Botswana was not an easy process but “that it has been so successful in Botswana is striking, especially as many argue that ‘minorities’ may,<sup>9</sup> if taken together, constitute a majority” (Solway, 2002:714). Even though those who hold Botswana citizenship claim the same rights and the use of Setswana, the level “to which those of Tswana background (defined here as based on the Tswana understanding of descent) compose a majority is a contentious issue” (Solway, 2002:714).

Cultural and tribal differences in any community is mirrored in its educational institutions, “and with the implications of globalisation and accelerated flows of migration, contemporary classrooms... are increasingly becoming sites of multilingualism and identity negotiations” (Basu, 2011:1309). Thus, for learners from marginalised groups whose languages and cultures are not represented in the curriculum, the learning processes can cause a form of “cognitive imperialism” or cultural racism, defined as “the imposition of one worldview on a people who have an alternative worldview, with the implication that the imposed worldview is superior to the alternative worldview” (Battiste, 2000:192). It follows that educational institutions, in this instance, contribute to the injustices and inequalities as the curriculum will reflect the policies, ideology and practices of the dominant group or those in power. Ways of operations follow the social hierarchies that exist within the community and educational systems uphold and become another apparatus in which social injustices are reproduced (Apple, 1979). As Apple points out (1979:32), schools partly “recreate the social and economic hierarchies of a larger society through what is seemingly a neutral process of selection and instruction”. During the apartheid era in South Africa, for example, the education system reflected the class relations and a system that “was used as a tool to divide society as it constructed certain forms of identity among learners” (Msila, 2007:146).

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<sup>9</sup> As used in Botswana, minority has multiple meanings: It refers abstractly to relative political and numerical status and in practice, it refers to any group in Botswana that is not one of the eight ‘tribes’ listed in the Constitution. In general, ‘minority’ groups are former subject peoples; they include all the non-Setswana-speaking groups that at some point were brought, voluntarily or by force, within the political orbit of Tswana chieftdom and subsequently the modern state of Botswana. ‘Minority’ most commonly connotes marginality (Nyati-Ramahobo, 2002).

Language is another source of division in society. During the colonial period the Setswana language received more attention at the expense of the other languages in the Bechuanaland Protectorate. It was used as an official language especially “in official documents, in socio-political discourse... as a medium of instruction in many places where it was not the dominant language of communication” (Mafela, 2014:430). As Mooko (2006:111) argues, “It is a historical fact that Setswana-speaking groups managed to rule over the other groups and this gradually led to the imposition of Setswana upon some of the subjugated groups.” Hence, as a dominant language, Setswana became a threat to the development of other local languages from the minority groups (Mooko, 2006; Mafela, 2014). Before independence, “education was offered in additional languages (Ikalanga and Afrikaans), and official materials prepared for Botswana’s first election appeared in numerous languages” (Solway & Nyati-Ramahobo, 2004:606), “including Setswana, English, Afrikaans, Ikalanga and Otjiherero” (Solway, 2002:714). When Botswana gained its independence, English became the official language with Setswana gaining recognition as the national language (Solway, 2002; Mooko, 2006; Mooko, 2009). Government affairs, official media and education became limited to these two languages. A situation which, despite recent government agreement in principle to change the existing policy, remains to this day (Solway & Nyati-Ramahobo, 2004). The omission of other languages from national recognition “became symbolic of wider exclusionary practices that are increasingly being seen as limiting if not perverting Botswana’s democracy” (Solway, 2002:14). The use of Setswana and lack of use of other indigenous languages in education in Botswana raise more questions than answers. “Languages other than English and Setswana were banned from use in schools” (Boikhutso & Jotia, 2013:799). All learners in every community was (and still is) expected to learn in Setswana and English (Boikhutso & Jotia, 2013; Nyati-Ramahobo, 2002). Only Setswana is seen as the “sole ‘national language’ and (supposedly) ‘the language of national unity and cultural identity’” (Lubinda, 2010:129).

While every person has the fundamental rights and privileges as stipulated by the Botswana Constitution for every citizen (regardless of colour, tribe or religious affiliation, in terms of Chapter 2:3 of the Constitution, (Republic of Botswana, 1966b), the so-called minor ethnic tribes and their languages continue to face obstacles with regard to collective rights and freedom in reference to politics of belonging. Issues of social injustices and inequalities together with internalised oppression are being challenged in institutional settings in

Botswana and the world at large. Classrooms in Botswana are increasingly becoming sites of multilingualism and identity negotiations. Just as in most Southern countries, schooling in Botswana is still designed along the policies inherited from the colonial era; in terms of structure of schooling, curriculum design, nature of subjects taught, and languages used in the spaces of learning. Therefore, there is need for educators to get a clear and thorough insight into the ways institutional operations “create and recreate forms of consciousness that enable social control to be maintained without the necessity of dominant groups having to resort to overt mechanisms of domination” (Apple, 1990:3) in order to assist learners in becoming critical citizens.

## **2.4 School context**

The Botswana national Vision 2016, encouraged multiculturalism through advocating and stressing the importance of a multicultural society (Republic of Botswana, 1998). One of the pillars states that Botswana needs to be “A Tolerant, Just and Caring Nation”. The Vision further states that: “The system of education, supported by public campaigns must stress the value of a multicultural society, and the need for tolerance and understanding of the differences between people” (Republic of Botswana, 1998:73). Schools are therefore recognised as immediate “sites of multicultural memories, histories and knowledge” (Basu, 2011:1311). It is acknowledged that activities within educational spaces can provide room for “opportunities to be lost, negotiated or redefined in various ways” (Basu, 2011:1311). However, according to Lubinda (2010:128), “despite certain positive gains and official pronouncements by government officials seemingly in favour of multiculturalism, ethnic equality, and development of minority languages, much remains to be done, to redress the imbalances and level the playing field”.

The community junior secondary school used as case study between 2015 and 2018 had 824 learners, of which 17 learners were registered as international learners (the number could be higher, as some parents do not register their children as international learners in order to avoid higher school fees) from other African countries and Asian countries, and 84 teaching and non-teaching staff. Among the international learners, the following countries are represented: Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, South Africa, Zambia, Uganda, Lesotho, Zimbabwe, the Philippines, and India. Both Botswana learners and staff hail from the numerous tribes and ethnic groups (both dominant and minority groups). Since learners are not accepted into the

educational system based on their tribes, the learners are placed into classes on merit basis. Hence, all or most classes consist of learners from different backgrounds (tribes, language, race, and nationalities).

## 2.5 My background

Human activities do not happen without interaction. It becomes evident in the significant role that educators have in enabling a conducive environment for critical engagement that encourages meaningful participation (Dreyer & Singh, 2016). Therefore, educators ought to be “aware of their own prejudices and engage in reflective practices where they critically assess the effect of their own views and practices in the classroom” (Dreyer & Singh, 2016:246). Autobiography, for this reason, becomes an integral part to providing “insight into the construction of teacher selfhood in relation to social, cultural, political, economic, and historical domains” (Kincheloe, 2005:2). Teachers and learners experience and negotiate their spaces of learning influenced by the environment they find themselves in. Kincheloe, (2011a:214) argues “that our identities do not come with us into the world in some neatly packaged unitary self. Since they ‘rise and subside’ in a series of shifting relationships and patterns”. It is precisely in our interactions with those around us that teaching and learning takes place. In the case of a critical engagement, these patterns or interactions entail an interplay of power hierarchies as well as social and political systems that individuals find themselves in.

I am what you might call *universal subject*. I was born and raised in Zimbabwe. My early childhood education up until the year I graduated with a Diploma in Secondary Education (1997) was done in Zimbabwe. I started my primary education at Dalnmine 2 Primary School in Dalny Mine, Chakari in the Mashonaland West province in Zimbabwe. It was a mine then predominantly inhabited by migrant miners from Malawi, Zaire and Zambia. Although located in the Mashonaland West Province, the villagers spoke mostly *chiNyanja*, *chiChewa*, *chiChawa* and many other dialects of Bantu languages from Malawi, Zaire and Zambia as well as Shona. During the years I lived in Chakari, I spoke Nyanja and Chewa more than I spoke Shona, and practised what to me came naturally, the Malawian culture. At the age of 12, I relocated to Harare where most people spoke Shona. I prided myself on being versatile in learning and grasping languages with such ease. I quickly improved my Shona speaking and writing skills in

order to fit in with the rest of my family members and school mates. I was oblivious of the differences and inequalities that were attached to the two cultures that I was living in or the mine village that I came from. Moving from a government Group B primary school to a multiracial group A English medium high school was the best thing that had ever happened to me, or so I thought at the time. I quickly immersed myself into my new environment with so much enthusiasm. I am a child born in the 70s who started school in an independent Zimbabwe in which households who could afford it, could send their children to a Group A school which were and still are multiracial and the medium of instruction is English; as opposed to Group B schools, which are Government schools whose medium of instruction is either Shona or Ndebele in most cases. Despite this, as a nation, Zimbabwe was [and still is] battling with issues of ethnic diversity as well as social injustices which, as a high school student in Zimbabwe or as a college student, I did not clearly understand. After graduating from college in 1997, I was married and relocated to Botswana. I did not fully comprehend the extent to which people could be mistreated or discriminated against because of differences that naturally exist. After my relocation to Botswana, I soon realised how my physical appearance, culture and mother tongue was going to be a source of discrimination in the years that followed. I am a Motswana<sup>10</sup>, a citizen of Botswana and hold both the national identity card (*Omang*) and national passport. I naturalised 10 years into my marriage (2007) and relinquished my Zimbabwean citizenship. My husband and I were blessed with two children – a son who is 21 years old and a daughter 16 years old.

I am an Art teacher by profession with a background in Visual communication design, a degree in Visual Art which I obtained from a university in the Western Cape in South Africa in 2009. I hold a master's degree in Visual Art (Art Education) from the same university where I am currently pursuing my PhD in Visual Art. With twenty-three years of residency in Botswana, twenty years teaching experience at junior secondary school level in Botswana, I have taught in two different districts and at three different schools; yet some of my colleagues, learners and community members still pass me for a *mokwerekwere* or a second-grade citizen. I have developed ways of safeguarding my wellbeing by exploring ways to affirm my different identities and “the relevant generation of knowledges, but also to the social empowerment

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<sup>10</sup> A Motswana is a citizen of Botswana in singular form, while Botswana is the country and the people of Botswana in plural are called Batswana. Setswana is the main language spoken by Batswana.

of, and transformation for, all of its subject(s)” (Honeychurch, 1996: 354), while finding ways to remain “obdurately on *both* sides of each boundary, simultaneously inside and outside, refusing to be a deserter” and trading off the benefits of one identity against the bonuses of the other” (Atkinson, 2001:308). This presentation of myself as an ‘insider’ (of my new Botswana identity) and ‘outsider’ (as a Zimbabwean) as I exist in the social sphere, leaves me to claim a unique privileged position (see Atkinson, 2001) as I know what it means to be a Zimbabwean (*mokwerekwere* as my learners and colleagues call me) and a Motswana (or, rather, a marginalised second-grade Motswana). I do not have to view myself as “locked in painful categories and trapped on the wrong side of vicious binaries” (St. Pierre, 1997:176). I have learnt new ways of hiding my emotions and feelings yet honouring those around me no matter how negative they can be – hoping that maybe they would meet me halfway. In order to survive the day to day interactions, as Younge (2010:23) points out, “It becomes your job and yours alone, to explain, to ignore, and to forgive over and over again”.

The continual shift between my multiple identities finds me silenced and functioning from the boundaries. Creating a safe space for my voice affects the way I interact with my learners and teachers, as I am aware that my actions are always “interpreted and understood as situated in and thus influenced by political, ideological, institutional and structural contexts” (Kelchtermans, 2010:613). I am aware that I carry along to class with me: over 24 years of personal experience as a Zimbabwean, 22 years as a Motswana and 10 years as a student at Stellenbosch University in South Africa. As such, I have inevitably constructed a specialised set of ideas and values about what it means to be a teacher, mother, foreigner, a citizen, and student at the same time.

During my undergraduate studies at Stellenbosch University, my art projects became a tool and a platform for me to negotiate my new social space and culture. Although Stellenbosch University and the Department of Visual Arts had structures to assist new students into settling in to assist with culture shock that some of us experienced, I felt that my presence was not welcome at times. I felt insecure being around the university spaces of learning and concluded that maybe I had been admitted for convenience more than my ability to tackle the modules. For the first time I became aware of my blackness and felt insecure and doubted myself and my capabilities. I had been affected by the symptoms of racism. I was traumatised by racist attitudes that resulted in my having a low self-esteem. During some of the classes, I

became a representation of what 'black', older women were meant to be. My identity as a black woman came into question, since I was not the so-called average student. I did not fit into the two categories that existed within the social spaces I was inhabiting. My lack of understanding either of the official languages that were commonly used in the academic area did not alleviate the situation either. It was my first encounter with Afrikaans, and isiXhosa. I had to continuously explain why as a black person I could not speak isiXhosa, and why I came to study at an Afrikaans university if I did not speak the language. In some cases I felt that I was addressed as a representative of my race rather than a unique individual. This personal interpretative framework for negotiating meaning thus influences how I interacted with those around me. Therefore, I tried to the best of my ability not to assert my beliefs and convictions and tried to be as impartial as possible throughout my research study. Impartial because I am aware how impossible it is to alter one's own identity that is imbedded with the dynamics of our history and society. As researcher, my position was one from which I identified with some of the participants who took part in the study research. Because I found myself in the minority group, this helped me appreciate significant and crucial events around which I made critical decisions that informed certain decisions and actions which I took when colleagues and learners uttered discriminatory statements or questioned my identity. As well consider "wider historic, cultural and political values or beliefs in framing and reframing practical problems to which solutions are being sought" (Hatton, 1995:34).

Critically engaging in self-reflection on the part of the teacher identity is thus of great importance as it enables objective involvement, as well as giving the individual the ability to "recognize the influence of ethical and moral beliefs behind professional practice" (Yip, 2007:285); gain insight on the issues that affect individuals as they navigate their social spaces. My identity as a teacher stems from both individual and collective life history. As, Britzman (1986:443) notes, teachers bring to class with them their individual beliefs and values as well as "their implicit institutional biographies – the cumulative experiences of school lives – which, in turn, inform their knowledge of the learners' world, of school structure, and of curriculum".

This shows that "our stories are not only our own personal accounts; we live embedded in biographies that are simultaneously personal, cultural, institutional and historical" (Weber & Mitchell 1995:9). Therefore, the ability to understand who I am (both my past and present),

is crucial as it enables a kind of introspection where as an active citizen I could function fully in a multicultural society; because as a teacher, my identity is embedded within a collective of cultural texts of those we come into contact with and individual life histories. It is crucial for us as educators to engage our learners' world view guided by their past experiences, interactions, and knowledges as they negotiate and construct meaning in their spaces of learning (Weber & Mitchell, 1995). Through reflecting on my histories and cultural and social beliefs, I came to understand my position as a teacher, researcher and student and how my social standing in history helps shape how I view the world, "seeking not precise steps to reshape our subjectivity but a framework of principles with which we can negotiate" (Kincheloe, 2007:33); as well as finding to open up safe and open spaces for my learners with their diverse cultural background, while exploring their environment without fear of discrimination, ridicule and intimidation (Sleeter & Grant, 1994). Ideally, I should understand how (both mine and my learners') "political opinions, religious beliefs, gender roles, racial positions, or sexual orientation" (Kincheloe, 2007:33) become an asset in creating a multicultural classroom with a conducive environment for effective learning (see Michael, Andrade & Bartlett, 2007).

In this chapter, I elaborated on the contextual setting in which the study is carried out. The global context, national context and school context were discussed to understand how history plays a significant role in how nation states came to being. The social and power hierarchies and inequalities are played out in schools hence the need to understand the history of a nation to understand any institutional injustices, inequalities or prejudices. Because of the nature of a qualitative study, "contextual understanding" is significant because of the need to understand the "behaviour, values, beliefs, and so on in terms of the context in which the research is conducted" (Bryman & Bell, 2011: 411) as well as understanding how sociocultural background affects our world views. My biography thus becomes significant because as a researcher, and teacher, for me to "engage in open and critical dialogue, and to engage as critical citizens working for a democratically just society" (Garber, 2004:7), I need to acknowledge the biases I bring along into the research process. In order to understand the context of the study better, the theoretical perspective that guides the research study is discussed in the following chapter, chapter 3.



## Chapter 3: Theoretical perspectives

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the theoretical framework of the study. Firstly, colonialism, anti-colonialism and postcolonial theories are discussed as an overarching framework. These theories are included as they form an important background for social justice and multicultural perspectives and the structural violence of colonialism currently continuing to characterise social, political, economic, and cultural relations in the postcolonial era. Colonialism that is linked specifically to art education is also included in this section. Secondly, decolonisation is included to provide a background on how education can be used to counteract colonisation of the African mind<sup>11</sup> and critically analyse the medium of instruction used in schools and institutions. Thirdly, social justice perspectives are explored, with a specific focus on social justice within the teaching and learning context. Fourthly, multicultural theory as well as concepts such as culture are discussed, also linking multicultural education with art practice. Art processes as pedagogy are also included in this section. Lastly, a synthesis of all theoretical perspectives used, and the core and related concepts as generated from the explored literature, is given.

### 3.2 Colonialism, anti-colonialism and postcolonialism

Some aspects of colonialism still influence the way nations, societies, and schools function in contemporary governments, and Botswana is no exception. Anti-colonialism and postcolonialism become a platform that could assist in exploring and challenging social hierarchies, prejudice, marginalisation and discrimination within nation states, communities, and institutions.

#### 3.2.1 Colonialism

Although *colonisation* as the colonial powers used the term initially implied the spread of European cultures while seeking greener pastures (Young, 2016), most definitions now acknowledge that colonialism is linked “with notions of racial and cultural superiority, ideological indoctrination, power and control over others and greed and violence” (Kanu,

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<sup>11</sup> African mind in this instance denotes internalised racism that believes that indigenous culture (both knowledge and language) to be inferior. Rather than a mind (both of Africans and non-Africans) that “draw on knowledge and languages originating from outside the continent... in conjunction with equally valued knowledge and languages that are rooted in the historical and contemporary African scene” (Ginsburg, 2000: xx).

2009:9). Earlier definitions of colonialism even evades mentioning people other than the colonisers and this focus allows for the encounter between two groups of people to vanish, while this encounter was in principle an experience that scarred the indigenous residents in extensive ways (Loomba, 1998). Edward Said (1994:7) provides the following understanding about the processes of colonisation:

Territory and possessions are at stake, geography and power. Everything about human history is rooted in the earth, which has meant that we must think about habitation, but it has also meant that people have planned to have more territory and therefore must do something about its indigenous residents.

The phrase to “do something about its indigenous residents” manifested in various ways, such as withholding the history of the colonised in history books, genocide, denying or reducing the value of indigenous knowledge and demeaning the culture of the indigenous groups (Wane, 2008). Georges Ballandier, (1963:3) a French anthropologist, explains that the colonisers claimed racial and ethnic superiority, according to which they granted themselves the right to dominate the indigenous residents who were often materially lacking and defenceless.

Central to the legitimising of colonization was the information which was collected during the European adventures into Africa during the 15<sup>th</sup> century (Loomba, 1998). The writings produced during this period presented categories of people as binary opposites. As Loomba (2005:53) asserts, through travel writing, Europe managed to differentiate itself from the so-called *rest of the world*. Furthermore, Europeans began to use concepts such as civilisation and barbarism that coincided with medieval descriptions of the *wild man* that lived away from a civil and domesticated society. These views polarised what it meant being black and being white and fuelled concepts such as the self (white) and other (black) (Loomba, 1998). Marginalisation, humiliation and inferiorisation of the ‘other’ lie at the heart and centre of all colonialist and imperialist projects. The process of othering, as explained by Memmi (1969), not only pretends imaginary differences are real, but also assign values to them. For instance, an appearance different or other than that of the self, can be associated with slackness, being backwards and having inferior intellectual abilities (Clements & Spinks, 1994; Dei, 2006).

The travel collections produced around the 1600s also note specific aspects such as food, religion and dress that inspired the onset of anthropological studies (Loomba, 2005:55). Far from being a fact-based philosophy, these Western sciences were based on a racist view of what it meant to be human (Loomba, 1998). In addition, the concept race was attached to a hierarchy while the claim was made that biology grounded these views. Apart from these “biological” differences that focused extensively on aspects such as skin colour, the concept race was also associated with culture and civilisation and in doing so, a black skin was associated with a lack of intellect and lack of civilisation (Loomba, 2005:57). Colonialists therefore transformed the imagined and fabricated differences in race as true and actual inequalities.

As Loomba (1998:124) notes, the race hierarchies established during the colonial period gave the colonisers an easy conduit to appropriate labour. The colonising society maintained its authority by using false justifications and stereotypes (Spurr, 1993:6). Therefore, the ideology of legitimising colonial domination involved the belittling and silencing of indigenous people as the colonisers claimed a process of domination to keep the other in a perpetual state of psychological subordination (Kanu, 2009:9). Colonialism objectified and robbed the colonised people of their human essence. It mapped the race and class division, as demonstrated by the remarks by the Prime Minister of the Cape Colony in 1908: “White workers were ‘delighted’ on arrival [...] to find themselves in a position of an aristocracy of colour” (Ranger, 1983:213).

Therefore, with colonialism, race became equated with identity as well as physical and mental attributes (Mutekwa, 2009:725). This was an integral idea internalised by those who eventually believed in an inherent superiority of the colonising culture (Fanon, 1967) and society was segregated accordingly. As a result, the colour bar was constructed with people from both sides crossing the bar (even though this was prohibited by colonial rule) and which transpired to the appearance of the mulatto (Mutekwa, 2009). The scientific theory of evolution as advanced by Charles Darwin in his book *Descent of Man* (1871), was later used to prop up notions of racial hierarchies (Loomba, 2005:57; Nyamnjoh, 2016:3). The intellectual heritage as well as the biological and physical appearance of the colonised was

devalued during the colonial era. From the perspective of social Darwinism, “African groupings and social systems would be naturally selected for slow but eventual elimination on account of their unfitness or lesser degree of humanity and capacity for creativity and innovation” (Nyamnjoh, 2016:3).

With this assumed scientific backing, colonialism operated on the political level, allowing nations to expand their rule and control others while simultaneously controlling the minds of the indigenous groups whose land was colonised (Alatas, 1977:17). That is, colonialism was “a process of cultural production and psychologization” which remains “unfinished business today” even though the period of decolonisation has supposedly ended (Gandhi, 1989:15). Dei and Kempf (2006) emphasises this by explaining that colonialism did not come to an end when colonised nations gained their independence. According to Mudimbe (1988), colonial rule was sustained by the consolidation of domination of the physical spaces, the mind and assimilation of Western values into the African economic and educational system.

There was no formal education in most African states during the precolonial, pre-missionary period. The period was dominated by indigenous systems of education that were in all respect informal and pragmatic, as well as submerged in the daily lives of people (Shizha & Abdi, 2009:29). Education was influenced by traditional religion and the philosophical principles that guided the precolonial period and were carried out through an apprenticeship system via which skills and morals were learned (Udo, 1989:1). Direct teaching was not used, instead the learners followed the method by practice and initiation, with the whole village and community as a trainee classroom.

Today the structure and content of what is taught in many educational institutions in most African countries are reflecting the educational systems of the colonisers, even after they had left, and in doing so limiting the education of African learners. Colonialism restructured how knowledge was understood, passed down and developed during the exploitive situation of domination (Loomba, 1998:57). Indigenous education and ways of knowing was uprooted when the people lost their land and had their cultures and minds eroded by the settlers

(Purcell, 1998; Wane, 2008:183). Van Sertima (1990:8) explains the impact that colonial education has on Africans:

No disaster with exception of the Flood [...] can equal in dimensions of destructiveness, the cataclysm that shook Africa [...] Vast populations were uprooted and displaced, whole generations disappeared [...] kingdoms crumbled, the threads of cultural and historical communities were savagely torn asunder that henceforward, one would only have to talk of two Africas: the one before and the one after the holocaust.

Educational institutions are central in the distribution of ideologies of those in power. Hence, during the colonial era, schools became an important platform for the dissemination and development of values and belief systems that were crucial for colonial expansion (Loomba, 2005; Mafela, 2014:426). With the negation of the indigenous educational system of teaching and learning, colonialism continued with the systematic devaluation and silencing of African histories, as well as the ongoing programmes of mental and material development. Instead of focussing on the human development of learners, education reinforced colonial thinking (Abdi, 2006:15).

Learner imagination and engagement with learning was suppressed by teaching learners subjects completely foreign and irrelevant to them and in English (Kanu, 2009; Wane, 2008:193). The English language, as a medium of instruction, took prominence in most colonies in Africa and most indigenous languages became side-lined, thereby treating the indigenous peoples' language and culture as inferior and uncivilized (Asgharzadeh, 2007). Language conveys culture which defines beliefs and values that in return define our position and place in the world of any given society (Wa Thiong'o, 1986). As language, culture and identity are all interrelated, using English in schools became a powerful tool to enhance the process of colonisation (Wane, 2008; Dei, 2006, Kempf, 2006; Loomba, 1998). Language can "silence and deny certain experiences, histories and identities" (Dei, 2006:16). Hence, using a foreign language teaches a child an unfamiliar and alien culture and using a foreign language for a child situates the child as a foreigner in his/her own environment (Wane, 2006). When dominant cultures opt to use their language as the official language and medium of instruction in school, they misrepresent, underrepresent and undermine the colonised, who

then have limited means to communicate and represent themselves (Asgharzadeh, 2007:129).

Ngugi wa Thiong'o argues for the local languages to remain prominent and maintains that they be further developed. He posits that for

[t]he biggest weapon wielded and actually daily unleashed by imperialism against that collective defiance is the cultural bomb. The effect of the cultural bomb is to annihilate a peoples' beliefs in their names, in their languages, in their environment [...] it makes them see their past as one wasteland of non-achievement [...] makes them want to identify [...] with other peoples' languages rather than their own (Wa Thiong'o 1986:3).

In the present-day school curriculum in Botswana, English plays a significant role in devaluing local languages, as learners are still encouraged to see their learning spaces as English-speaking zones, while their local languages are side lined. While nine out of the ten subjects are currently taught in English, most learners end up missing the required pass mark, especially if they do not pass English and Science. In today's educational system, learners are taught subjects that at the end of their school life are of little use to them. These learners continue to struggle to find ways to fight the oppressive nature of making sense of their sociocultural, economic and political spaces (Dei, 2012a). Education became the primary agent for the internalisation and acceptance of Western culture and the channel that can support the development of the colonized other (Kanu, 2009:9).

### **3.2.2 Anti-colonialism**

Educating learners for transformation stems from the premise that sees education and the schooling process as a vehicle for social change and justice. The journey is about intellectual situating and grounding learners in anticolonial thought, to ensure that the practice of being a member of society has transformation, decolonisation and liberation as goals (Imoka, 2016:102). Anti-colonialism acknowledges many forms of exclusion and injustices that exist in the school or societal systems and seeks to correct them. As Rabaka (2003) argues, the anticolonial theory encourages critical engagement about the inequalities that continue to

exist in schools and finds ways to open up safer spaces to discuss social injustices emanating from the colonial period as a way to understand the current situation. As mentioned in the previous section, colonisation did not end when colonized states gained their independence, but continues to exist amidst the institutes and systems of governments that were established and became instrumental in perpetuating colonialism even after the British left the continent (Wane, 2006). Therefore, Dei and Kempf (2006:2) value the “anticolonial prism” that offers new philosophical insights to challenge Eurocentric discourses in order to make way for indigenous intellectual and political emancipation. The anti-colonial interest lies in re-examining the relations established during the colonial period and is not focused on the new ways in which new-colonial relationships are established to control and monopolise the collective design of knowledge, laws and society (Dei, 2012a:112). The examination explores power hierarchies that exist because of exclusive views on otherness that can be based on race, ethnicity, gender, class, religion, language, disability and sexuality (Dei, 2012a:112). Cannella and Manuelito (2008, cited in Cully, 2016:37) state that anti-colonialism

reveals and actively challenges social systems, discourses and institutions that are oppressive and that perpetuate injustice [...] and [explores] ways of making these systems obviously visible in the society; [supports] knowledges that have been discredited by dominant power orientations in many ways that are transformative; [constructs] activist conceptualisations of research that are critical and multiple in many ways that are transparent, reflexive and collaborative.

Anti-colonialism defies the colonialists’ sense of reason, authority and control (Dei & Kempf, 2006). It is crucial to understand that anti-colonialism challenges the symbiotic relationship between debilitating maltreatment and domination (Cully, 2016:37). Anti-colonialism aims to disrupt colonial knowledge production and seeks to theorise colonialism and dominating social relations through the lenses of indigenous knowledge and worldviews. From this point of view the aim is to overturn the dominant structures and relationships that feed into the collective acceptance of a ranking of power structures (Dei, 2006:5). Marginalised and silenced knowledges and cultures may reclaim their agency with otherness as a central catalyst for mobilisation. This calls for relooking at the educational practices that provide spaces to address colonial and re-colonial relations in the school systems. As far as the

educational system is concerned, there is a need to look at the extent to which classroom practice and syllabus design disregards difference at the cost of an inclusive approach (Kempf, 2006:130). With an exclusive approach to education, learners might never experience their own identities and cultures echoed in classrooms and in these situations they can become disconnected from their true identities and cultures (Kempf, 2006:132–33). A multicultural approach to knowledge and learning therefore becomes necessary and crucial. Schools with such a model of engaging learners towards social transformation work from the perspective that the learning experience at school should feed into social change and social justice (Imoka, 2016:103). Schools must therefore become open and safe spaces that afford learners from diverse backgrounds and cultures a platform to realise and exercise their freedom and rights to achieve their goals (Dei & Doyle-Wood, 2006). This multifocal approach can contribute to what Dei (2000:17) calls for, namely a comprehensive and inclusive overview of historical as well as current events and ideas that channel the proliferation of humanity. Ceisair (1992, quoted in Kempf, 2006:134) argues that history must be a continuous conversation in which recollections and perspectives are being exchanged. Anticolonial teachings should therefore focus on and lead to the creation of relevant knowledge, not simply the reproduction of existing knowledge and practice. Abdi et al. (2006:24) call for the necessity to *re-culturate* the ways in which Africans are learning so that education in Africa honour the lives of those being educated. They further expand on this by saying that the new cultures of education must consider both the dynamism and the situational sustainability that are required for the development of evolving societies (Abdi et al., 2006). Such an education must therefore appreciate the cumulative nature of world cultures that Yande-Diop (1992) talks about; cultures that do not live in isolation with a single master narrative but a fluid narrative that is context-based and evolved with time, drawing their inspiration from their environment.

It is imperative to note that the knowledge production during the colonial era was not an easy process as it side-lined the knowledge and views of the colonised (Loomba, 1998). In reaction, anti-colonialism demands a change in the perspective from which and how knowledge is delineated, within academia as well as within the general public sphere so that the histories and voices of the minorities, as well as their experiences be included, and acted upon (Dei & Kempf, 2006:4). In the anticolonial approach, people integrate the systems of power hierarchies and dominance. These interlocking systems of dominance are reproduced and



maintained and kept under control (Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2001). Anti-colonialism thought is about discussing the differences and hierarchies found amongst the races and tribes in a nation; power hierarchies and discrimination found within societies (Dei & Kempf, 2006). Larbalestier (1990:155) states that “differences is both a conceptual, cultural and material problem. It is embedded in a politics of identity which are in turn embedded in relations of power”. It is a social construct that manifests itself through stereotypes, stigma and labelling within a society. The anti-colonial thought thus presents an analysis of the ideological, political, cultural, and social relations established during the colonial period as well as a discourse that focuses on protest within identity politics (Dei & Kempf, 2006:9). Loomba (2005:58) asserts that people whose race was constructed as inferior had many obstacles to overcome in order to get trained in science, while their voices were labelled as unscientific. Bell (1990, cited in Ruck-Simmons, 2006:9:158) cautions that anticolonial disruptions do not set out to classify race as a synonym for oppression or is embarrassed or humiliated whenever race is mentioned. According to Dei and Kempf, (2006), racialisation is a historical construction that perpetuates white supremacy over other racial minorities. Therefore, the justification of power hierarchies in which racial minorities are viewed as inferior, are used to validate discrimination, oppression and prejudice. These discourses continue today so that black people are still judged based on their skin colour with the stereotypical association of being deviant and dishonest, while a brown skin is for instance associated with terrorism (Dei & Kempf, 2006:10). This was made possible by the production of racialized subjects, which refers to the way in which bodies are allocated specific categories according to skin colour and other specific characteristics (Dei & Kempf, 2006:10). However, in the anti-colonial discourse, race is not cast to create racism, but rather to spark a conversation about it rather than denying its existence (Dei & Kempf, 2006).

Concerning unequal relations in the production of knowledge, anti-colonial activists call for active participation of those discriminated against and operating from the margins (Dei & Kempf, 2006). Indigeneity and local indigenous knowledge with relevance to the mind and body are significant factors in anti-colonial theory. *Indigenous* as a term with many connotations is linked in many ways to the era of colonialism (Wane, 2008:190). The colonisers constructed indigenous knowledge as not only inferior to their own knowledge and learning, but also as underdeveloped, wild and primitive – knowledge that manifests in wild

nature (Wane, 2006:99), a situation that still exists today. Dei (2012a:111) defines ‘indigenous knowledge’ as “knowledge of the Indigenous peoples of a particular land used for everyday living, self and collective actualization, survival and social existence”. While Simonds and Christopher (2013:2185) use the term ‘indigenous knowledge’ to describe “local, culturally specific knowledge unique to a certain population [...] often depicted as being alive, in current use, and transmitted orally”. Wane (2008:184) argues “that indigenous knowledge is a living experience that is informed by ancestral voices”. Therefore, Africa must explore ways to make African education more indigenous and to use this in return as a way to merge the re-culturation of social change with the process of manifesting change in the process of taking back control over politics and the economy (Dei & Kempf, 2006:14). It must be noted that African indigenous knowledge is not homogenous and that each culture has specific traits in terms of indigenous knowledge (Wane, 2006:99).

In the pursuit of anticolonial intellectuality and praxis, Dei (2012a:106) advocates for the use of indigenous culture and indigenous knowledge in order to reclaim agency and creativity. For him, it is important that people aim to

decolonise themselves and institutions, and develop an anti-colonial intellectuality that will help to challenge and subvert the colonial mappings and colonial cartographies of institutions of learning... Anti-colonial intellectuality and praxis is about bringing ideas into fruition as social practice, as grounding and testing theories in the contexts of the liberatory struggles of our peoples (these must include the Indigenous peoples on whose land we currently reside (Dei, 2012a:106-107).

Claims of language legitimacy work in connection with education to delegitimise knowledge and perpetuate racial hierarchies of languages. Language was used by the colonial authorities to separate the home language associated with everyday life and social interaction from the language associated with education and complex thinking processes (Wa Thiong’o (1994), cited in Jaimungal, 2016:71). Jaimungal (2016:71) further expands that colonial alienation is therefore a process that upholds the racial hierarchy of languages and reproduces ideological perceptions in favour of English. English, at the cost of other languages, was used as the only language that could access education, science, and the arts and in doing so became the channel to assess intelligence. This shows how superior English was and is even today in

African society, and my school is no exception. It was not (and still is not) merely a marker of status, but a measure of intelligence, an indicator of progress.

However, anti-colonialism can be used as a methodology to explore new perspectives of the world and to conceptualise the world in different ways (Ali, 2016:89). Indigenous and local knowledge can be used to challenge colonial thinking. Indigenous people can regain the depth of insight and morals associated with their own traditional cultures as opposed to those of the West, by re-entering the rituals associated with their cultures (Wane, 2006:98). I was educated in the Western educational system. Hence, for me this research is in a way a form of claiming my personhood and mind. The indigenous anti-colonial framework explores issues of resistance and contestation of ideas. Because knowledge resides with the different indigenous bodies as they come to be grounded through their local histories, building on what both my learners and I know, I believe that learning at school can incorporate the history and cultural beliefs of all in order to support learners in the process of taking ownership of their own learning and in doing so, to develop agency and an own voice (Dei, 2012a:114).

Exploring the learners' cultural heritage through the anti-colonial framework in education can ensure a complete development of the learners to be aware of their history and endure a better understanding of the self in the process (Dei, 2012a). The educational system that many African nations are following today emanate from the colonial era and continue to oppress the indigenous knowledge systems including local languages. Thus, for any transformation in the schooling system there is a need to incorporate an anti-colonial theoretical questioning skill. As a teacher, I treat my learners as active participants in knowledge production. Schools can plug into the decolonisation process by engaging learners through an inclusive education and anti-colonial lenses (Dei, 2012b). Anti-colonialism contributes to inclusive education as it distances itself from the controlling and authoritarian flavour of colonialism by maintaining an inclusive attitude towards difference (Dei & Kempf, 2006:3).

### **3.2.3 Postcolonialism**

Postcolonialism describes a heterogeneous set of subjects and critical enterprises and it is difficult to pinpoint an exact definition, mainly because colonialism is not in all respects a process of the past (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin, 1995:2). The term is furthermore used to describe an analysis of all forms of Western historicism (Ashcroft et al., 1995:45). Ashcroft et

al. (1995:2) posit that the term *postcolonial* can lose its meaning, because of the term's vague use to refer to a wide variety of socio-political and economical practises. The term does not indicate the exchange of one era, colonialism, for the next era after colonialism, but refers to a model that can be used to analyse and criticize the conversations and elements of colonialism (McEwan, 2001:94). It entails that as a critique of development, postcolonialism is significant and continues to play a crucial role in challenging the taken-for-granted North-South relations (McEwan, 2001).

McEwan (2009:17) summarises main understandings of postcolonial as follows:

- Postcolonialism as 'after colonial' – written as post-colonial to signify the notion of time or epoch
- Postcolonialism as a 'condition' – related to the state 'after-colonialism'
- Postcolonialism as a metaphysical, ethical and political theory – dealing with issues such as identity, race, ethnicity and gender, the challenges of developing postcolonial national identities, and relationships between power and knowledge
- Postcolonialism as literary theory – critiquing the perpetuation of representations of colonized and formerly colonized people as inferior, and countering these with alternative representations from writers in (de-)colonized countries
- Postcolonialism as anti-colonialism – a critique of all forms of colonial power (cultural, political and economic, past and present)

Regardless of all the discussions on the meaning of *post* in postcolonialism (Loomba, 1998; McEwan, 2009), the term *postcolonial* has also been used to describe the international culmination of colonial administrative structures instead of delineating how authoritarian power structures are still manifesting from colonial to postcolonial regimes (Shahjahan, 2016:696). According to Young (2003:2, 7), postcolonialism refers to the equal human rights within the concrete as well as cultural contexts of all people and that it furthermore ensures ethical and just connections between people by changing their thoughts and behaviour. Shahjahan (2016:696) asserts that postcolonial theory is the same as poststructuralist and culturalist perspectives on the theories underlying colonialism and is often referred to in the works of Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak, Edward Said, Robert Young, Stuart Hall, and Dipesh Chakrabarty. The concept arises from documented examinations of how knowledge and the

content of history textbooks is structured in a way to rob specific communities of agency and to exclude these communities from mainstream society by labelling them as culturally inferior and with limited intellect. In this regard Edward Said's book *Orientalism* (1979), is a crucial book in the postcolonial discourse on how certain European countries marginalised African cultures (Smith, 2010:252). The book claims that the racial categories that portray the binary opposites between the colonised versus the colonisers justified the oppression of the so called inferior (black) race and the superior (white) race and laid the foundation on which *othering* was based (Smith, 2010). The book also shows how and which knowledges were generalised during colonialism (McEwan, 2009:34). Abdi et al. (2006:17) assert that it is essential to take the cultural context of knowledge into account as knowledge can never be neutral. All knowledge is socially located and Delgado and Romero (2000:8) suggest that local knowledge and cultural traditions are spread across the globe, but only a few of these knowledges and traditions are relevant to a global society.

Postcolonialism is used to study what happens in a multicultural or multi-tribal nation where hierarchy of power exists. It involves the process of decolonising which as Porteus (2003), asserts, involves "the liberation of social agency, the movement away from the passive on both the personal and collective levels" (cited in Van der Westhuizen, 2013:691). Van der Westhuizen (2013) posits that postcolonialism involves the disrupting and unsettling of dominant assumptions of power hierarchies in a bid to form new hybrid power relations. Postcolonialism specifies historical situations and cultural formations that emerged in response to political changes that took place after colonialism. Young (2016:58) states that postcolonialism consolidates deliberate and real change within repressive contexts and marks the beginning of active resistance to imperialism on the one hand while embracing political movements and perspectives that focus on positive changes on the other hand. These processes provide the present with a past and help to explain, for example, why colonialism erased or disregarded the cultures and knowledges of indigenous groups and accordingly why these indigenous groups do not find themselves represented in schools (Kanu, 2006:9). Postcolonialism also points to the ways in which language, culture and power politics were intertwined during the colonial period and subsequently how language can be used to achieve the opposite – to decolonize and resist the power hierarchies that emerged during the colonial era (Rizvi, Lingard & Lavia, 2006:250).

Postcolonialism is designed to undo ideologies of colonialism and accordingly African languages should regain status alongside the European languages (Wa Thiong'o (1993:28). Although many African countries have since gained their independence, English remains an official language in many of the nation states (London, 2006) especially as the language used in social institutions (Foucault, 1970:188). As already explained, education on offer during the colonial era was used to implement the perspectives of the colonizer (London, 2006:51). It cultivated a mind-set that English was superior and justified the undermining of indigenous languages, hence there was a need to focus on critical education that responds to the "resources of history, language and culture to practically procure processes of becoming rather than being: not 'who we are' or 'where we came from', so much as to what we might become, how we have been represented and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves" (Hall, 1996:3). Dei (2000:72) also affirms that Africans should reclaim their indigenous cultures and knowledges in order to take responsibility and to work towards inclusive societies for the continent.

The question of indigenous languages and their position in the educational system is a central concern for many African countries since English still remains the official language at the expense of local languages. Through the postcolonial lenses, while it is true that Africa is not outside of the current global market forces, the African education system should focus on needs that emerge from African communities, instead of focusing on global economies and global socio-political issues (Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2006:58). Postcolonialism provides the context to read colonial texts as well as ways of understanding the ongoing effect of colonialism. Therefore, postcolonialism is concerned with how the historical narratives are narrated as well as the way they are written to misrepresent the indigenous perspective (Rizvi et al., 2006:252). Spivak (1988) in *Can the subaltern speak?*, recognises the injustices the subalterns undergo and advocates for the subaltern to speak for themselves rather than letting others speak for them, in other words, allow for multiple narratives by the subalterns. For Spivak this is to offer a voice and an audience to a native that operated on the margins as well as a chance to explain another history that had been silenced, thereby helping to discuss the importance of recognising differences. Rizvi et al. (2006) assert that colonial discussions are often contested and that identity and differences may not be interpreted in essentialist terms, but rather conceptualised by acknowledging that within an international context,

cultural and political trends reflect each other or merge, while the focus is on the specific contexts where cultures are different and in competition with each other. (Rizvi et al., 2006:253). They argue that identity is not static but in constant flux, and that the identities of the coloniser and the colonised are formed through interaction with each other and furthermore, that these opposite identities therefore influence the identity of the other through discourse and interaction and from within cultural contexts that can ultimately acknowledge or silence the cultural differences that exist (Rizvi et al., 2006:253).

Identity is therefore fluid and continuously produced via language in contexts that can either be supportive or hostile (Rizvi et al., 2006:253). Bhabha (1994) refers to a *hybrid* identity and Young (1995) reminds us that it is important from a postcolonial perspective to acknowledge that a hybrid is a blend between two breeds or species. Hall (1996:18) defines hybridity as “a cut and mix process” and for Loomba (1998) the blend is also a strategy that is based on the assumption that the colonisers belong to a superior race. This blend can result in a process in which knowledge, culture and political perspectives can produce more intricate identities that require new analyses if it is to be understood Gilroy (1993), (cited in London, 2006:43). Bhabha (1994:156) explains hybridity as a “problematic of colonial representation [...] that reserves the effects of the colonialist disapproval, so that the Other ‘denied’ knowledges enter upon the dominant discourse and estrange the basis of its authority”.

Hybridity defines the mental suffering that the colonised people go through when they realise that they do not reach the goal of being white that they strive for (London, 2006). Bhabha (1994:23) argues that the minority cultures continue to struggle with the process of putting into words and to negotiate cultural hybridity that surfaces when society is transforming. Nyamnjoh and Jua (2002) argue that education from colonial times therefore continues to repress, exploit and cause individual and collective struggle concerned with the survival of indigenous knowledge systems; thereby ensuring the subjugation of the colonised people (Anderson, 1991). Hybridity outlines how colonial power can speak with two voices at the same time, because the power hierarchies implicate the *other* and therefore colonialism cannot consist of a single voice and is thus undermined (Young, 1995:23). It is in hybrid forms that the colonial tradition with its cultures and knowledge can gain contrasting interpretations so that history can be re-understood (Rizvi et al., 2006:254). In contemporary terms, Bhabha argues that the process of hybridisation has destroyed the dialogue pertaining

to a fixed identity bringing to light the way marginalised people can change the status quo (Rizvi et al., 2006). The contentions of postcolonialism regarding the relationship between power relations and knowledge can be traced back to educational institutions where indoctrination takes place as well as resistance to injustices that exist within a society (Rizvi et al., 2006). Van der Westhuizen (2013:692) states that the themes of postcolonial research in education include critical engagement and analysis of “the essentialisation of cultural identities and racial inferiority”. It challenges any understanding of the aftermath of the empire and colonial encounters to write back against the colonial power hierarchies.

### **3.2.4 Art and the colonial and post-colonial periods**

With the arrival of missionaries in most African states, education became a church affair, with religion as the main objective. Art education during the missionary period was considered as “heathen culture” (Onuchukwu, 1994:55), and hence was excluded from the school curriculum. In Nigeria, for example, art education was banned in schools (between 1908 and 1922) and reintroduced in 1923, with a focus on the European painting techniques that included amongst others a study of perspective and anatomy (Wangboje, 1969:88). Before that, art was not considered important and was excluded from the school curriculum. In Zimbabwe, like most African countries in the southern part of Africa, art education was a subject of racial division. Africans studied “hand crafts” (Williams, 1989:30), with an emphasis on village crafts such as basketry making and pottery. Art as a subject – with emphasis on drawing and painting – was confined to European schools. In Botswana, the emphasis at the time of the study was placed on the technical skills of drawing and design, more than on the crafts. School exhibitions and fairs carry more drawings, paintings and sculptures with very little of the crafts, which are usually relegated to older craftsmen and -women in the villages. Most teachers currently view crafts as less artistic and tend to avoid the topic.

In precolonial times, traditional crafts were mostly done by elders. Hence, due to the lack or limited passing down of such skill, learners and teachers opt to concentrate on painting, drawing and design work. This is evidenced by the way most learners assume that art is about drawing and painting only. During the colonial period, art was used to reinforce cultural differences and indicated values of racism and colonial superiority (Abrahams, 2003). Projections of Africans during the 19<sup>th</sup>-century engagement with the West remained fragmented, with Africans being reflected as children. Africa was somehow the primitive side



of the West (Landau & Kaspin, 2002). The West had “muted, observed, put to work and classified” Africans and “rarely engaged with them as equals” (Landau & Kaspin, 2002:12). The images produced during the colonial period represented Africans as binary opposites of the superior White; a race that needed to be cleansed or civilised in all aspects of their lives (Landau & Kaspin, 2002).

After independence, artists from many African countries who went through the colonial education system chose to express themselves artistically by hybridising their indigenous artistic background through the inclusion of traditional expressions within the international (mainly Western) discourse on art (Odiboh, 2004:2). This form of expression to a large extent characterised Africa’s postcolonial art while authors justified the expression of hybridisation as a way to inject African idioms and proverbs into the Western language (Odiboh, 2009:76). Onkara (1986:8, cited in Wa Thiong’o, 1986:8) states,

As a writer who believes in the utilization of African ideas, African philosophy, the African folklore and imagery to the fullest extent possible, I am of the opinion the only way to use them effectively is to translate them almost from the African language native to the writer into whatever European language he is using as a medium of expression.

Although more modern artists now hold university credentials of formal training, developments in art in the postcolonial period show that even the poorly educated artist produces realistic works, which are similar to those who graduated from formal training (Odiboh, 2009). Therefore, as Odiboh (2004) asserts, an artist qualification or education does not influence the form or content of contemporary art, as the common characteristic of modern African art is the notion to regain a connection with precolonial Africa – this is also true of artists who have left the African continent (Odiboh, 2009:77). In art, this is prevalent in West and Central Africa, especially in Nigeria, Sierra Leone and the Congo (Kasfir, 1999), where contemporary art exists within a context where precolonial art was practised (Odiboh, 2004). However, for areas within the southern part of Africa, such as Zimbabwe, South Africa and Botswana, the situation is different, as little is documented of precolonial art. The reason for this is that precolonial art was for centuries not recognised as art and subsequently artists expressed themselves in new forms rather than to be comfortable with existing forms. (Odiboh, 2004:4) For contemporary art that exists within a surviving history, artists draw from

their tradition and work by employing diverse materials and techniques; for example, Yinka Shonibare, who explores his identity through re-appropriating and using African motifs, or “Youssef Bath from Cote d’Ivoire [who] draws from traditional myths, mysticism, spirituality, and witchcraft to convey power and strength of Africa in his work” (Odiboh, 2009:77), by using “chalk and coffee as alternative pigment on paper and tree bark” (Oyelola, 1988:24). Some other artists, such as the Zimbabwean sculptors, turn to expressions of myths and folklore via distorted and fanciful reflections to suggest identity and culture (Odiboh, 2004:3), which Cornelius Adepogba (1996) criticised as overly simplistic interpretations and in need of skills to represent what the artist wanted to achieve (Odiboh, 2009:77).

### 3.3 Decolonisation

Decolonisation is not new and neither has it gone uncontested (Mbembe, 2015:n.p). It was part of a nation-building project set out to create the nation-state, by providing a history to that state as a starting point in the process to unite its multicultural citizens (Mamdani, 2012a:85). Decolonisation “is a project of ‘re-centring’, a self-ownership and its struggles are about repossessing and taking back that which was wrongfully taken away” (Mbembe, 2015:n.p). As a discourse of ownership, decolonisation is about relations, inherent rights, skills as well as fighting against discrimination and protecting each other and reclaim a history from those in power (Mbembe, 2015:n.p.).

For Wa Thiong'o, as discussed by Mbembe (2015), decolonisation is not about shutting Europe out of Africa, but about verbalising in a clear voice what the centre of African consciousness and culture is, as opposed to making a European mind-set and culture the centre of Africa.

Crucial to this decolonising of the mind or institution (schools included) is what is taught in comparison to what was taught in the institution (Mbembe, 2015). In this instance, Ngugi (1986) advocates for the teaching of African languages and states that

The biggest weapon wielded and actually daily unleashed by imperialism against that collective defiance is the cultural bomb. The effect of a cultural bomb is to annihilate a people's belief in their names, in their languages, in their environments, in their heritage of struggle, in their unity, in their capacities and ultimately in themselves. It makes them see their past as one wasteland of non-achievement and ... it even plants serious doubts about the moral righteousness of the struggle (Wa Thiong'o, 1986: ii).

Language is important in identity formation, teaching and learning, as well as understanding of the self. It plays a big role in discrimination and the process of excluding and othering those perceived as different (Dei & Kempf, 2006). Language becomes central as well as a tool for decolonisation. Being able to name and call things into being is not just about allowing the voices to be heard, but becomes an active process of breaking through forms of imposed silence and in these ways language becomes a tool in the process to resist oppression and to reclaim the cultural and political ownership that was taken away (Dei & Kempf, 2006:11). Davidson and Yancy (2009:4) argue that being able to name and verbalise the reality of one's context is to emphasise the stability of society. Goldberg (1990:314) affirms that it is necessary to resist the language of the dominating party in the struggle against discrimination and to ensure at the same time that the struggle is not categorised and understood in the language of the oppressor. It is safe to say that if no action is taken against the discriminatory structures no form of struggle will achieve any results (Dei & Kempf, 2006).

However, Achebe (1997:28) emphasises the advantages of using English as a second language and explains the advantages of writing in world language as a

“Decolonising of the mind” working with resistant knowledge and claiming the power of local subjects’ intellectual agency. Resistance in this context ... is about resistance to domination of the past, contamination of the present and the stealing of a people’s future (Dei 2006:11).

Achebe further noted in his 1964 speech titled “The African Writer and the English Language” that he was given English and will therefore use English for specific purposes. Therefore, using English as the language of the oppressor can be a tool to create international awareness of the discriminating restrictions imposed on people by the oppressor as a form of resistance (Dei, 2006:11). Resistance here is about fighting for survival using language as a tool for decolonisation. Novels written by writers from Africa the likes of Ngugi wa Thiong’o, Chinua Achebe and Soyinka, to name but a few, prove how an understanding of English helped to inform the world about cultural traditions. These books created international awareness of African societies and cultures and in essence challenged the idea that Africa lacked a history and culture of its own (Wane, 2006:94).

Dei and Kempf (2006:12) explain that it is important to maintain the difference between the biological white identity (skin pigmentation) and the dominating and oppressing structures that are associated with white. In most African societies that were under the colonial rule, whiteness has little to do with white identity as a racial maker, but referred to the collective systems that enabled privilege and power to some at the cost of others (Dei, 2006:12; Nyamnjoh, 2016:1). Nyamnjoh (2016:1) writes as follows:

In Cameroon for example, it is commonplace for parents to encourage their children to study hard in order to become white (not through bleaching chemically [...] but through a process of self-cultivation that brings power, privilege and opportunities for self-activation their way). What such parents really want is for their children to aspire to attain the perceived luxury [...] boundless abundance of power [...] associated with white skin or body.

Dei et al., (2008:7) say that being indigenous and indigenous knowledge is crucial in the understanding and manifestation of political and social structures in society. Indigenous knowledge acknowledges the varied belief systems of knowledge within a society (Dei et al., 2008). In a bid towards dismantling stratified constructions of knowledge forms, knowledge cannot be examined as fixed categories, experiences, and social practices. Therefore, the condescending process during which indigenous knowledge is misrepresented, is in effect a marked effort to manifest a hierarchy of knowledge within education, society, and politics (Dei et al., 2008:4). Indigenous knowledge is becoming prominent again as once marginalised people clamour for their rights – that their past and present narratives be included in the histories of their nations (Dei et al., 2008). Discursive agency and the power of resistance manifest in minority and marginalised groups (Dei & Doyle-Wood, 2007:660). Decolonising knowledge is therefore not simply about de-Westernisation, but rather a means to develop a perspective that allows the marginalised or colonised to see clearly in relation to oneself and others in the universe (Mbembe, 2015) in response to colonial and postcolonial intrusions. Educators today have the challenge to ensure that learners are informed by complete histories (Dei, 2008). There is a need to open schools into safe spaces for learners to question the long lasting and condescending misrepresentations of indigenous knowledges (Dei, 2008:70). The educational system must therefore (for both learners and teachers) expose learners to different perspectives of the world by explaining multiple and alternative

knowledge forms (Dei, 2008:70). bell hooks (1995:3) writes that it is an important step for marginalised people to be able to feel represented in their struggle against decolonisation of knowledge. Art can be used as another way to convey alternative political views, and worldviews and the everyday social values and beliefs that individuals in a given community or society live by (Leavy, 2015). Art in such an instance depicts the narratives of the marginalised how they experience their social spaces in an alternative way (Leavy, 2015). In South Africa, students have cried out against the support in higher education for dominant views that elevate white people, men, western perspectives, capitalism and heterosexuality and demand that South African, African and other than western global perspectives be included in teaching, learning and research (Heleta, 2016:1). As Mclsaac (2008) asserts, employing the concept of resistance in relation to a counter-hegemonic consciousness requires careful consideration.

For decolonisation to be effective, there is a need to challenge or subvert dominant cultures through “examining the processes of both domination and emancipation in order not to reify the totalling force capital” (Mclsaac, 2008:91). For colonised people, decolonisation means rewriting the historical information that was left out of colonial curricula (Dei, 2002:11). Calling for critical engagement pertaining to social hierarchies and power relations as a way to open up safe space to challenge discrimination and prejudice. Therefore, decolonisation is about fighting for survival, resisting “domination of the past, contamination of the present and stealing of people’s future” (Dei, 2006:11). Since inequalities exist in everyday spheres of human existence, as Dei (2006:11) asserts, decolonisation is about questioning exactly how authentic, autonomous, and original knowledge within science, literature, culture, and art is. Indigeneity in this instance is about affirming the rights of the people, not empowering local subjects to wrest control, but retaining their rights in the face of so-called modernity. Though indigenous knowledge originated in the past, this does not deem it irrelevant to the present - indigenous knowledge can overcome the suffering it experienced under colonial domination (Dei, 2006:11).

### **3.4 Social justice**

We live in an increasingly diverse and inequitable society where educators now face new challenges of not only having to help learners understand societal oppression, but also helping them to understand and translate actions designed to facilitate social change.

Regarding the universal use of the term, social justice is a complex notion, especially in terms of its underlying theories, its definition and actual manifestation (Keet & Carolissen, 2012: i). The foundations of social justice rest in finding effective ways to address issues of inequality in society and challenging oppressive systems while promoting justice through education. Whether one teaches in India, Germany or Botswana, education, in Freire's view, represents "both a struggle for meaning and a struggle for power relations" (Macedo, 1985: xiii). Paulo Freire, born in 1921 in Brazil, pioneered the concept of critical pedagogy as we understand it today. He based his theories on his observations of the oppressed and poor living around him. Such experience facilitated his work towards improving lives of those who suffered from discrimination and prejudice (Kincheloe, 2008a; Palmer, 2001). Bell (2007:1) argues that there is a need to define the inconsistency and adapting nature of oppression by finding options that enable and encourage equal participation of learners in school, while they learn to challenge and understand a way of life that is based on stereotypes and assumptions, which hide oppressing behaviour. This critical pedagogy defines the body of literature that aims to provide ways in which marginalised and discriminated against people can challenge those in power. The roots of critical pedagogy draw heavily from the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory that originated in Germany and remains a tool to query and confront the ways of every-day life (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2011:285). It refers to the theoretical tradition developed particularly by Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse and Walter Benjamin. According to Kincheloe (2008b:48), it is difficult to outline this theory as it not only consists of various other theories, but it is also continuously changing in reaction to new awareness surfacing and at the same time it deliberately avoids being absolute about its own parameters to allow room for debate amongst its followers.

### **3.4.1 Social justice perspectives**

Social justice addresses issues of inequalities in society and the way in which burdens and responsibilities are unequally distributed along structurally engineered fault lines that become ciphers along markers of exclusion and inclusion (Ayers, Quinn & Stovall, 2009). Van Deventer, Van der Westhuizen and Potgieter (2015:1) describe social justice as "an impetus towards a socially just world – [...] based on the assumption that all people, irrespective of belief or societal position, are entitled to be treated according to the values of human rights, human dignity and equality". According to Dewhurst (2011:364), social justice is deeply

seated in experience and involves praxis, a combination of reflection and action, while its purpose is to expose and overturn structures and systems that hinder or prohibit equal human rights for all. Its goals are equity, democracy and just distribution of social wealth and power. Ayers (2010:791) defines social justice as a process that recognises all human rights and exposes the structures and systems that do not follow social justice and allow for marginalisation. Social justice is dedicated to addressing and embodying all the collective feelings and everyday experiences of segments of society who are suffering because of discrimination and poverty (Kincheloe, 2008b:11). Bell (2007) explains social justice as a state in which all people are given equal opportunity to excel to the best of their ability. It involves a society in which its members share responsibilities towards one another and the world at large. Hence, the goal of attaining social justice should be democratic, participatory, and inclusive, offering human agency and capacities for working collaboratively to create change.

### **3.4.2 Education and social justice**

Current educational contexts contain many challenges that are firstly influenced by movements and ideas from the past, secondly by having to answer to a variety of stakeholders and thirdly education receives indistinct guidance, making it very difficult for teachers to navigate through an arena filled with incongruities that consist of both struggles and hope (Kincheloe, 2008b:1; Kincheloe, 2009:32).

However, everyday teaching and learning in schools can support the dismantling of dominating and exclusive cultural structures, as schools are by nature social and collaborative spaces, providing teachers with opportunities to undo cultural hierarchies and segregation (Kymlicka, 2003:51). Ayers, (2004:13) states that teaching for social justice is “teaching that arouses students, and engages them in a quest to identify obstacles to their full humanity and the life chances of others, to their freedom, and then to drive, to move against those obstacles”. The three underlying pillars of social justice education should be equity, activism and social literacy (Dewhurst, 2011), while the attitude of those adhering to social justice education should follow the three R’s – namely to be relevant, rigorous and revolutionary (Ayers et al., 2009). Neutral education, according to Freire and Macedo (2000:34), does not exist. Rather, education is central in integrating children

into the logic of the present system and ... the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world.

According to Freire (1970:60), social justice education is “a process of humanization” whereby true freedom is praxis, when people combine acting and reflecting in a process to change their society. The act of education, in other words, becomes the practice of exploring and critiquing the world around us, aimed at rebuilding such that “all people can have equal access to their full human potential” (Dewhurst, 2011:366). With emphasis here placed on critically finding solutions to existing injustices through reflective activities and on encouraging people to fully participate in changing the status quo that occurs within institutions (Dewhurst, 2011). It has been recognised that there exists a relationship between education and society (Freire, 1970; Gutmann, 1999; Kincheloe, 2008). For Freire, learning always involves social relations, but in capitalist countries these relationships are based within the context of oppression, also at schools (Apple, Gandin & Hypolito, 2001:129). Therefore, it is a social institution and practice that is driven by the ethical principles of society, especially its conception of justice; a social enterprise directed towards the realisation of social values. With the integration of cultural diversity and social justice education, learners can be guided to distinguish the unequal distribution of privilege within their own communities (Lee, Blythe, & Goforth, 2009). A central concept in Freire’s theory of education is, as Kincheloe (2008a:164) explains, the idea that education and politics are constantly intertwined and as such, all teachers are also assigned with political roles. Teaching is therefore a political act and educators ought to embrace this by demonstrating a critical perspective on especially the controlling socio-political, cultural and economic structures and systems that are reflected in the curriculum (Kincheloe, 2008b:70). Freire’s pedagogy is geared towards dealing and ending the cycle of mental oppression by enabling learners to gain control of their lives and challenge oppressive systems. According to Freire, social change in the context of liberation and emancipation is possible, as the “world has been constructed by dominant power and thus can be reconstructed by human action” (Kincheloe, 2011b:235).

Fraser (2007:27) explains social justice as requiring a society that is based on equal human rights for all, while the barriers are broken down that prevent these human rights to be applied to all. She refers to a system called ‘parity of participation’, which makes it possible



for all members of the society to be active citizens with equal political voice and equal opportunity to achieve social esteem (Fraser, 2007). For learners, schools then become places where agency and hope can manifest by changing the structures that encourage disadvantages to some (Keddie, 2012:263). In this case, teaching for social justice centres upon knowing or fixing your eyes on teaching learners who they are; what their hopes, dreams and passions are; what skills, abilities and capabilities each one has; and acting on this information to improve their chances of achieving their great potential (Ayers et al., 1998; Keddie, 2012). It is about acknowledging and recognising their social standing and giving them support to deal with differences they might encounter, while acknowledging the social context in which they live and their economic background and economic reality (Ayers, 1998:xvii). Gibson, (1999) advocates for teaching and learning methods that takes into account learners' background and heritage. As Dei (2005:268) elaborates, a school can only be seen as inclusive and fair if all students have opportunities to see their home contexts, cultures and histories reflected in learning content. Freire also warned against using only one theoretical doctrine within the school context, as education should move beyond all ideologies towards emancipation (Freire & Macedo, 2000: xiii). Accordingly, education is not stable, but constantly being transformed in praxis (Freire, 2005:84). Freire (2005:84) stated that "In order to *be*, it must *become*. Its 'duration' [...] is found in the interplay of the opposite's *permanence* and change". Fraser, like Freire, acknowledges that the removal of any hindrances is crucial for learners to participate at an equal footing (Keddie, 2012). Education becomes a site for social emancipation and resistance. Emancipatory education allows for learners to be heard and not just to receive knowledge from their teachers – the teacher as the sole distributor and the learner as a passive receiver of knowledge. Instead, knowledge and to know means to place oneself in the world with the ability to change the world by rewriting content (Apple, 2010:130). In this instance education becomes a dialogue, where learners' views of the world are important and taken seriously (Beckett, 2013). According to Freire (2005), dialogue in this case is not seen as just a skill, but as a way to involve students in carrying out tasks as well as learning through participation. Dialogue enables learners to become critical about the knowledge processes and to cultivate a better understanding of the object of knowing. It is therefore essential for learners to realise that when they accept the struggle for emancipatory education, they also accept the total

responsibility to be personally involved in struggles that aim to ensure freedom for all (Freire, 2005:68).

Freire criticised the 'banking' concept of teaching and learning approach, which views learners "as empty vessels or accounts awaiting the deposits of the teacher" (Lewis 1995:149). He advocated for an approach that aims to transform learners as they themselves interact with knowledge and inform knowledge (Gibson, 1999:130). As learners work with their teacher to problematize their world, learners learn to view the world as reality in motion, and not static, where understanding of the past becomes an opportunity to clearly grasp where they come from, where they are going and how to combine the knowledge into building a better future (Freire, 2005). Knowledge emerges through inventions, not when learners are merely empty containers to be filled up with content delivered by teachers (Freire, 2005: 72). This type of learning where learners are seen as passive participants in the process of learning awaiting to receive, file and store deposits encourages a lack of creativity (Freire, 2005), projects ignorance and as such undermines what education should be – active learning and understanding (Freire, 2005:72). In this process, information is consumed with no critical thinking and learners are not only alienated from their own cultures, but also become vulnerable to the influences of imperialism (Durakoğlu, 2013:102). Freire believed 'banking' education invalidates learners' creative power and serves the interests of the oppressor (Freire, 2005:72), while the teacher is seen as the opposite of the learner – the one who knows all as opposed to the one who knows nothing – and whose sense of self is fed by this sense of being superior (Freire, 2005:72). According to Freire 'banking' education teaches learners obedience without active participation in knowledge acquisition, and encourages them to see themselves as passive beings that should adjust to whatever reality or realities are presented to them by the teacher (Freire, 2005:73). A key platform for social justice schooling must be about opening doors, opening minds and possibilities and training learners to become active participants in bringing about change in their lives and society – a process where teachers and learners engage in the action of learning from each other (Ayers et al., 1998).

Teaching is therefore an invitation offered and undertaken without guarantees. Greene (1998: xxx), posits that

teaching for social justice means “teaching to the end of arousing a consciousness of membership, active and participant membership in a society of unfulfilled promises – teaching for what Paulo Freire used to call ‘conscientization’ (1970), “heightened social consciousness, a wide-awakeness that might make injustice unendurable.”

Kymlicka (2003:51) explains that education should involve teaching learners skills to evaluate their own lives so that they can make more informed decisions to better their own lives and that learners would accordingly then find it easier to make good decisions about what is needed to improve society. Once awakened to injustices around them, learners might develop a sense of agency and by being agents, they can have an impact on their contexts, rather than to settle with an imaginary better context. As Maxine Greene (1998: xxx) suggests, learners must realise for themselves the need to fight for their freedom. This conviction cannot be given to anyone but needs to be realised through praxis (Freire, 2005:67). As Freire (2005:36) argued, “The awakening of critical consciousness leads the way to the expression of social discontents precisely because these discontents are real components of an oppressive situation.”

Learners should take responsibility for their own freedom and should explore the real lives of people who refuse to contribute to their own oppression (Gibson, 1999:131). Therefore, education for social justice propels towards action away from complacency and challenges one to find ways to stir away from passivity, cynicism and despair and reach beyond superficial barriers (Ayers et al., 2009). Ayers (2010:791), referencing Maxine Greene (1995), argues that through art learners can rely on imagination to guide them towards a more hopeful view of how life should be and towards the still unknown processes of transformation that will require action. This gives one the ability to consider an alternative world view and possibly see alternative solutions and ways to see things. Releasing the imagination means envisioning other points of views and narratives of the people within the communities or learners in the classrooms to encourage equity and social justice (Palmer, 2001). Education for social justice is always focusing on the minorities and marginalised and their evolving needs under oppression (Kincheloe, 2008b:23). Oppression functions through taken-for-granted everyday traditions and customs that do not question “the assumptions underlying institutional rules and the collective consequences of following those rules” (Young, 1990:41). Oppression is more than an imposition of power by one group over another; instead, it

encompasses a collection of ideologies and their various manifestations and as such oppression is also continuously evolving around an often contradictory imbalance of power struggles and relationships (Freire, 1985: xii).

Oppression as a form of ultimate control feeds on death and not on life (Freire, 2005:78). It aims at controlling how people think and act and inhibits their freedom and creativity (Freire, 2005:78). One mechanism that can be employed to challenge oppression is to challenge the dominant narratives and social hierarchies that maintain the social injustices within a society. Furthermore, it is important that members of society understand that their reality is constantly changing and not static (Kincheloe, 2008b:72). Accordingly, they should develop a critical mind that sees the world in an alternative way that can be changed. For teachers, teaching becomes a place to amplify the voices of those learners who have struggled to be heard and to open up a safe space to learn about their own agency and empowerment, how to nurture their own learning and about ways to collaborate towards social justice (Kincheloe, 2008b:25). Freire (2005:74) explained that the marginalised should not adapt to the world of the oppressors, but that the oppressing context itself should change to accommodate all as equal human beings. The aim of social justice in this case becomes that of cultivating analytical skills to identify discrimination and ways to challenge social injustice. Learners, as they are participating in critical engagement through problem-solving activities about their experiences in the social spaces, respond to the challenge because they understand the inequalities or social issues at work within their social environment. The response to these issues gives rise to new challenges and better understanding of themselves (Freire, 2005).

Kincheloe, (2008b:85) contends that schools can encourage ignorance instead of learning as he concurs with Macedo<sup>12</sup> in his discussion of Donald Macedo. Kincheloe, states that as schools continue to ignore other histories and of the marginalised groups, learners struggle with a disconnection between theory and reality and that makes it even more difficult to pinpoint oppression (Kincheloe, 2008b:85). Therefore, education needs to break beyond the

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<sup>12</sup> Macedo “has been a central figure in critical pedagogy over the last twenty years. His work with Paulo Freire broke new theoretical ground and its attempt to develop a critical understanding of the ways in which language, power, and culture contribute to the positioning and formation of human experience and learning” (Kincheloe, 2008b:84).

confines of schooling and celebrate diversity and difference, rather than aiding education that serves the agenda of an elite powerful minority (Morrison, 2001).

Critical participatory democracy is designed to bring equality and redress to the so-called bad times, when socio-economic circumstances intersect not only with poverty and collective despair, but also with a slump in culture, when the use of stereotypes tear at the fibre of society, alongside patterns of dehumanisation and urban colonialism (Morrison, 2001:281). Education for social justice is therefore not viewed simply as a matter of classroom methodology but extends to support human rights to all within society (Morrison, 2001:281). 'Voice' according to Freire is aimed at including minorities in decision-making processes that have a direct or indirect impact on their status and interest. Murphy, (2012) echoes this position, stating that granting previously excluded minorities a political voice is consistent with democratic consent. He argues that members of society should have a voice and be represented in decisions that have an influence on their daily lives (Murphy, 2012:33). Such an environment becomes a way to open up the political sphere that encourages critical engagement on social issues affecting the marginalised learners in their spaces of learning. This process counteracts the process of silencing the voices of marginalised people (Keddie, 2012:268). Giving minority groups a political voice has the potential to transform majority preconceptions about the groups that have *the right to participate in decision making* and give them a sense of pride and dignity to gain representation in key decision-making forums (Murphy, 2012). Keddie (2012:268) points out, "Connecting with the histories, cultures, contributions and perspectives of non-dominant groups through the curriculum is one of the many inclusive schooling practices that can support recognitive justice for marginalised learners". Berry (2001:623) explains that the ability to accept differences and diversity in others depends on whether or not one feels at home with one's own cultural identity. Giroux's powerful advocacy for the rights of disempowered and oppressed groups for recognition in and through education places no pressure on learners to conform to popular cultural stereotypes or to distort their own cultural priorities (Morrison, 2001).

The concept of recognition<sup>13</sup> forms the framework to issues pertaining to politics of belonging and identity, which forms a backdrop to issues of inequalities and discrimination that are

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<sup>13</sup> "The recognition paradigm is explicitly meant as a Hegelian alternative to the Kantian liberalism of (the early) Rawls and Habermas. Authors such as Charles Taylor, Nancy Fraser and Axel Honneth have attacked

found in society today. Politics of recognition in western societies came to existence in the late 1960's when people became disillusioned with social democracy and as discrimination against race and ethnicity coincided with thoughts on nationality and belonging, which were also reflected in discussions about diaspora and postcoloniality (Hines, 2013:8). At the same time and in response social movements came into being that confronted the politics of social democracy in new ways (Simon Thompson, 2006:2). Many followers of a multicultural politics of recognition, for example Charles Taylor, Axel Honneth and Iris Marion Young, emphasise that it is not only individuals who seek recognition and human rights for all, but also social groups who pursued recognition for the uniqueness of each group (Baum, 2004:1073). The fight to be recognised is an innate condition for human beings. As humans we depend on each other to sustain our humanness and to maintain meaningful lives (Webb, 2010:2366). Our self-worth and identity develop through a process of "intersubjective recognition, which are then sustained by relations and institutions which consolidate these forms of intersubjectivity" (Webb, 2015:46). However, instead of supporting this need, we often threaten one another's existence, and in doing so we create complicated encounters in our strive for recognition (Webb, 2010:2366). However, as Van Deventer et al., (2015: 3) contend,

a politics of recognition in a difference-friendly world is part of acknowledging the existence of difference, such as those based on ethnicity, racial diversity or gender. This perspective locates social justice praxis in both the political-governmental and the local arenas, as it describes those *dimensions of justice that cut across all social strata*.

In the midst of diverse nations that consist of different tribes, races, cultures, speaking different languages, dealing with multicultural learners is becoming more difficult in today's classrooms (Keddie, 2012). As Keddie (2012:264) asserts, such contentiousness is intensified when teachers and learners are not aware of social justice, or do not understand what it entails.

Honneth, Taylor and Fraser have overlapping concerns about the notion of the politics of recognition as they are focused on formulating ways in which to manifest social justice (Hines, 2013:9). For Honneth (1995), as Claassen (2014) remarks, recognition politics represents a

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mainstream liberalism for being insufficiently attentive to the demands of recognition. In his most recent voluminous work *Das Recht der Freiheit* (RF), Axel Honneth brings his version of this paradigm to full fruition. Criticizing Kantian theories of justice, he develops an alternative theory of justice, modelled on Hegel's *Rechtsphilosophie*" (Claassen, 2014:67).

shared identity that emanates from a collective identity. He argues that for one to have a sense of belonging individuals need the support of each other to not only formulate intentions, but also to manifest these intentions (Claassen, 2014:70). Claassen (2014:69) suggests that the politics of recognition be appreciated following Hegel's thought that

Seen this way, 'mutual recognition' refers in the first instance to the reciprocal experience of being affirmed in the desires and aims of the Other insofar as their existence represents a condition of the realization of one's own desires and aims. On the condition that both subjects recognize the interdependence of their ends.

In other words, it is not possible to isolate one's identity from the social environment we inhabit with all the diverse cultures and groups we encounter (Bell, 2007). Deranty and Renault (2007) explain that social progress depends on regulating and standardising the combined anticipations of the individual members of society regarding the morals they want for society. Because individuals rely on others to understand themselves, it shows that society has a binding character (Claassen, 2014). Charles Taylor (1995: 225) contends that the politics of multiculturalism is based on contemporary politics that insist on recognition for the marginalised and minorities. Following Habermas (1994), Hines suggests "that the need for recognition is pre-rational; humans are driven not by self-interest but the desire for understanding and reciprocity" (Hines, 2013:10). In other words, being recognised differently or being misrecognised does impact on identity formation (Hirvonen, 2012). Taylor (1994), advances that the idea at the core of politics of recognition is that individuals highly value their individual identities as well as the communities which they identify with and therefore individuals need recognition and respect (Taylor, 1994:25). In other words, the politics of recognition, according to Taylor, are partially shaped by our recognition or non-recognition by others. He asserts that as human beings, we are because others acknowledge our existence and if an individual or society fails to acknowledge our being, we suffer from being misrecognised (Hirvonen, 2012). The idea, as Murphy (2012:79) points out, is that when others recognise the importance and worth of our identity, this contributes "significantly to our sense of security, self-respect, and wellbeing". In the same breath, non-recognition or recognition in some diminished or demeaning way can constitute a significant source of personal anguish and function as oppression as the sense of self is distorted (Taylor, 1994:25). Recognition is therefore not something to be taken lightly or for granted as it manifests as a

critical human need (Taylor, 1994:26). Taylor (1994) asserts that as individuals our identities are shaped by our environment and are constantly shifting as we explore different social spaces and how the public acknowledge our actions. Thus, recognition needs a significant portion of acceptance by others in order for the self to manifest within a specific culture in society (Baum, 2004:1073). This implies that the notion of social justices is not just about equal distribution of wealth, resources, or opportunities. Rather it comes into play when there exists collective biases within societies that result in some social groups having less space to exercise self-respect (Fraser, 2009:79). Honneth (1992:188) argues as follows:

We owe our integrity ... to the receipt of approval or recognition from other persons. [Negative concepts such as 'insult' or 'degradation'] are related to forms of disrespect, to the denial of recognition. [They] are used to characterise a form of behaviour that does not represent an injustice solely because it constrains the subjects in their freedom for action or does them harm. Rather, such behaviour is injurious because it impairs these persons in their positive understanding of self – an understanding acquired by intersubjective means.

Taylor and Honneth, assert that being able to be recognised as an individual is important for one's wellbeing (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). They argue that for self-understanding, individuals need acknowledgement and recognition of those around them to fulfil their quest and to shape their identity. Therefore, with not enough recognition a person will not mature (Fraser & Honneth, 2003:28). Fraser, like Taylor and Honneth, highlights the concept of identity when she discusses the politics of recognition. According to Lara and Fine(2007), she conceptualises recognition as a philosophical issue under the umbrella of social justice that is related to systems of cultural value as well as the way in which people interact and engage in institutions for which she sees the possibility of positive change (Lara & Fine, 2007:41). This means considering how institutional cultures can affect how people experience their social spaces, as well as their identity, self-esteem, and their political voice. Fraser proposes that if we analyse the ways in which cultural valuation deem certain people inferior, we can refer to this as misrecognition (Lara & Fine, 2007:41). Webb, (2010:2367), commenting on Fraser's notion on recognition, believes that "modern society comprises two empirically interrelated but analytically distinct orders of stratification: an economic order of distributive relations that generate inequalities of social class and a cultural order of recognition relations – relating to



gender, ethnicity, age and sexuality – that generate inequalities of status”. Keddie (2012), following Fraser’s argument, posits that the struggle for recognition can never be detangled from the struggle of distribution and that both these struggles, if addressed with appropriate approaches, can facilitate the wellbeing of marginalised learners (Keddie, 2012:268). Acknowledging Rawls’ (1999) theory of justice, which advocates for equity and fairness in democratic institutions and governments, Fraser (2009:72–73) expands on Rawls’ principles by borrowing from the politics of recognition to add recognition of cultural difference to the theory of justice. According to Van Deventer et al. (2015:3) such a theory of justice moves away from a power driven society that rely on hierarchies, towards a society that encompasses not only a redistribution of power and resources, but one that also recognises cultural differences.

The three authors, Honneth, Taylor and Fraser (Hines, 2013:10) point to the fact that there used to be too much emphasis on social class in politics at the cost of other issues such as redistribution and are calling for a critical discussion about the emerging of social classes “both as an identity and as a marker of growing material inequalities in capitalist societies” (Hines, 2013:10). It is important to take into account that concerns regarding social classes, identity, culture and difference continue to be all significant in modern society and one issue did not replace the other (Hines, 2013:10). This calls for the growing importance to recognise and acknowledge diverse cultures in society as failure to do so has negative effects on the identities of the misrecognised or misrepresented cultural groups (Hirvonen, 2012). Honneth, Taylor and Fraser concur on the significance of recognition, each proposing recognition not only as means to challenge the contemporary terrain, but also as a means of achieving social justice (Hines, 2013).

Honneth, Taylor and Fraser also agree on the importance of recognition (Hines, 2013). According to Thompson (2006), each writer formulated a political theory that relies on the fact that any society can on only be just and fair if all members of society receive equal recognition. They suggest that being able to be recognised as a unique individual is central and crucial for social inclusion. Hence the need to afford everyone cultural visibility and equal representation and to avoid misrepresentation of those groups that operate from the margins. Nations should thus try to open up safe spaces for all to enjoy self-governance and recognition of cultural rights (Hines, 2013). Honneth (2002:504) believes that this atmosphere

will inhibit anti-social behaviour that prevents independence. He further suggests that recognition struggles are a result of fearing the pain that follows misrecognition. After all, people acknowledge and appreciate each other when given the freedom to exercise their democratic rights (Claassen, 2014). Misrecognition, for Taylor (1994), can be viewed as a process of oppression. He posits that social justice is dependent on the recognition of both the self and others, because, as mentioned before, identity building processes are dependent on interaction with others and it is therefore crucial for any human being to be in conversation with other (identities), even if those interactions are difficult and challenging (Taylor, 1994:32).

For Fraser, the politics of recognition challenges cultural, and economic inequalities that are perpetuated by institutional policies upon those who have no voice or operating from the margins. It occurs, for example, when individuals adopt dominant group cultural beliefs that are alien to theirs, or individuals are rendered voiceless or marginalised through stereotypes practised routinely in everyday interactions in the community in which they live (Fraser, 1996). The struggles also occur in a world of income and poverty ownership. Accordingly, Fraser (1997:2) created a framework that includes recognition and redistribution in an integrated way to address these issues. James Tully (2004:7) explains that the battle for identity, the battle for the distribution of power and resources and the battle for recognition are always interrelated. Fraser and Honneth (2003) implore the effects of misrecognition, suggesting that to be misrecognised is to be belittled and dismissed as an active participant in any social interaction and looked down on as one not worthy of respect and attention.

Fraser associates the concept misrecognition with being undeserving and not worthy, while Honneth explains that without enough recognition a person cannot appear in public spaces without corresponding feelings of shame (Hines, 2013:11). He identifies the struggle for recognition as a foundation for political action. His account shows how suffering can serve as a ground for ethical, social and political theory. The need for recognition, according to Honneth, finds voice at three levels of social interaction, namely personal and intimate relationships, relationships related to law and thirdly everyday casual and social relationships (Fraser & Honneth, 2003: 142). The first form of recognition refers to the loving, close bonds with partners, family members and close friends. The second form of recognition refers to the ability to honour and respect others in terms of their human rights, while the third form of

recognition refers to being accepted as an active citizen (Thompson, 2005). Against this backdrop, Honneth declares the need to explore the pain that results from institutionalised oppression, as well as to explore the pain caused by socio-political movements (cited in Fraser & Honneth, 2003:117). He suggests that at the core of social injustice is to experience how society withdraws its recognition (Fraser & Honneth, 2003:132). Honneth also discusses the importance of love and the crucial role it plays in mental development and how a lack of love can prevent the development of children's personalities (Fraser & Honneth, 2003:138).

To overcome misrecognition thus calls for institutional transformation of social spaces. It entails that the institutions and systems that generate hierarchies or classes of people according to some criteria should change so that people are not devalued and prohibited from participating in society (Fraser, 1996:26). Bingham, Biesta, and Rancière (2010), posit recognition as a beginning and an end point. Social suffering begins "at the level of love, law or political action" and should accordingly be addressed at these levels through recognition. (Bingham et al., 2010:91). Here then, recognition holds important affective qualities of love and is fundamental to emotional characteristics – self-worth, respect, and dignity. Honneth's discussion on struggles regarding recognition draws attention to the impact of social visibility. Hines (2013:11) asserts that people's suffering and struggles begin when an individual or group is excluded and inclusion is therefore a crucial step to recognise all. Bingham et al. (2010:91), following Honneth's discussion on misrecognition, posits that misrecognition is seen "as a source of feeling. It is social suffering itself, rather than the form of misrepresentation ... that propels individuals to struggle for dignity at home, for rights in the legal system and for status in society at large".

As Freire (2005), in his theory of social justice puts forward, without love, dialogue ceases to exist, as love is the beginning and foundation of dialogue. Honneth (1995), writes of the significance of love as an emotional attachment to personal identity and draws attention to the recognition of esteem, which comes from those around you. However, while Honneth and Taylor used psychoanalysis to back up their theories that link the political with the emotional, Fraser turned away from psychoanalysis and claimed that misrecognition and recognition are situated in socio-political structures (Hines, 2013:12). Fraser (1997), contends that any account of social justice that emphasises the importance of cultural recognition over and above the politics of redistribution would have failed the very concept of social justice,

as they both affect the individual in various ways (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). Fraser argues that the focus in political culture has moved from redistribution of recognition (Fraser & Honneth, 2003:89). She argues that questions of cultural defence are taking precedence in comparison to the economic inequality in contemporary politics, and she is not alone in this view (Hines, 2013). Key theorists within political theory argue that as a result of the intensified focus on identity and difference within society, significant issues, such as an increase in society's material divisions, were ignored (Hines, 2013:13). Fraser proposes that justice in the present day needs to consider the cultural context as well as the economic position of the individuals in question (Fraser & Honneth, 2003).

Fraser believes that the three R's, recognition, representation and redistribution, cannot be assimilated into one or two concepts (though there is a dynamic relationship between these issues) and should be dealt with separately in order to understand and deal with the injustices in society. For instance, she emphasises that it is important to revalue and represent disrespected identities with their corresponding cultures. It is also important to recognise and value cultural diversity. Furthermore, in terms of redistribution, the injustices are mostly defined from an economical point of view (Fraser, 1996:8).

Dealing with issues of belonging and equity in schools is complex for educators especially with providing a just and fair system for disadvantaged learners (Keddie, 2012). Furthermore, it is also important to remember that the context of education always involve a variety of pedagogic relationships (Griffiths, 2003:18). An education suitable for all learners implies that stakeholders should accommodate all the differences among them and that this process of sharing and finding consensus will always be challenging (Griffiths, 2003:37). Although it is crucial to create a safe environment free of any obstacles that prevent learners from suffering any inequalities, it is not possible to know in advance what exactly the challenges will be and how these challenges ought to be faced (Keddie, 2012:264). Bourdieu, (1977:493) explains that the consequences of not facing these challenges in a safe school environment means that the school as unequal space will reinforce the inequalities among stakeholders.

Differences among learners vary including race, tribe, culture, political, social position, to name but a few (Keddie, 2012:264). Thus, this impacts on the way equality is approached – if the

disadvantage is thought to be an economic issue, redistributive measures might be prioritised... where it is thought to arise from cultural barriers, recognitive measures might be prioritised... and where it is thought of as a political issue, representative measures might be prioritised

Therefore, being able to create a safe space for critical engagement towards a just society requires the ability to deal with complex and stressful situations and relationships (Griffiths, 2003:19). As Griffiths (2003) advances, it is important to establish and develop policies that address different issues on difference that affect learners. This is so because of the multiple aspects identified in the politics of difference. There are different identity groups that always find themselves being left behind; for example, issues of sexism, feminism and disability are constantly overlooked. Therefore, plurality means recognising and respecting all members of the community despite mutual differences. This is so difficult because, as Fraser puts it, what is then implied is actions in the political sphere, not mere tolerance. She does not propose a move from a politics of culture (recognition). Rather she argues for the need to “(re)instate an economic model of social justice” (Hines, 2013:14). As Griffiths (2003) points out, it is necessary to distinguish and understand the intricacy of human beings partly in order to classify the world as it is, because there will always be those whose voices will not be heard due to power relations.

Fraser (1997:12) proposes a critical theory of recognition that can single out the aspects of cultural politics of difference which can be combined with the social politics of equality in a logical and lucid way; one that takes into account indigenous knowledges in schools and their system of education while including the narratives of the marginalised groups and simultaneously challenging social hierarchies that are found in institutions. Keddie (2012), asserts that this way forward is not simply about being able to qualify for group identity on the basis of marginality or privilege, but that the way forward is instead to undo the structures and systems that obstruct equality and to encourage learners to achieve their goals (Keddie, 2012:266). Provision of economic freedom or fair distribution of resources for institutions is important in encouraging learners to break the cycle of poverty. Keddie (2012:266) explains that the principles of distributive justice acknowledges the cause and effect relationships between for instance poverty and future economic hardship on the one hand and on the other hand poor performance at school or when learners leave school at an early age. Being

able to score good grades at school or a higher institution is crucial in disrupting these links. Existing research has shown that this is also happening in the context of Botswana where the dropout rate at schools is reflecting the incidences of poverty and crime (De la Rosa, 1998:268). Therefore, schools need to become sites that open up spaces and take part in the process to rid institutions from oppressive domination and to address distribution from that perspective (Miller, 1999:15).

Teaching for social justice must therefore ensure equal sharing of resources for all the members within the institution. As Hines, (2013) posits, “Recognition stands as the normative category of the theory of social justice; all matters of redistribution can – and should – be considered as matters of redistribution” (Hines, 2013:16). Therefore, individuals should not understand the term ‘distributed’ literally, but rather consider Rawls’ view of how society is constructed to consist of a variety of institutions and practices that collectively have an effect on how different groups of people have different levels of access to resources (Miller, 1999:11). It is clear that government policies contribute to the social hierarchies that exist in a nation state, through the way national resources are distributed to the masses; for example where schools are built and the provision of material resources of those schools (Waghid, Waghid & Waghid, 2016). Education does not operate in a vacuum and the social aspects that have an impact on people, are mostly also political (Gutmann, 1999: 14).

For the purpose of this study, social justice was considered from Fraser’s perspective, according to which recognition and distribution were used as a way to challenge inequalities within the school used in this study. In the formation of pupil culture at school, learners are socially positioned, whether we like it or not, on the basis of attributes such as skin colour, accent, sexual orientation, disability and nationality. Some such groups are treated with (dis)respect and/or are materially (dis)advantaged. Young (2000:88) explains that it is important to take into account that most people do not only belong to one social group or subgroup but often belong to several of these groups and therefore it is problematic to categorise people according to a singular group identity. Therefore, trying to define a homogeneous community identity ends up marginalising and discriminating against other group members, especially those considered as minorities. To help work with this complexity, Fraser (1997) suggests using the analytical dimensions ‘cultural’ and ‘structural’. As Arendt (1958:190) writes,

Action [...] always establishes relationships and therefore has an inherent tendency to force open all limitations and cut across all boundaries [that] exist within the realm of human affairs, but they never offer a framework that can reliably withstand the onslaught with which each new generation must insert itself.

As an individual I agree with Spivak (1990:59) who claims that it is not as much about who is speaking as it is about who is listening and this shift in focus is even more critical when it is not always clear who will listen to the voice of a person coming from a third world context.

Education for social justice provides a space where all learners enjoy their democratic rights and democratic privileges. Fraser argues that the best chance of dealing with both the cultural and the structural dimensions of difference is to work towards transformation in both, in ways that blur group differentiations through socialism and deconstruction. In other words, to rather have an attitude towards culture and differences that opens up instead of having an attitude that is closed in with fixed parameters and to be willing to engage in an open field of discussion rather than to approach a discussion with predetermined outcomes, to name but a few examples (Griffiths, 2003:38). Admitting complexity is important rather than keeping it at bay or ignoring it, or pretending it does not exist.

### **3.5 Multicultural theory**

Due to the increased movement of people because of immigration, individuals from diverse cultural, ethnic, and racial backgrounds now live in close proximity and have formed what Benedict Anderson (1991) termed *imagined communities*. The movement of people across national borders has not just increased, in some instances it has even created the impression that national borders are non-existent and that new social borders determine the ways in which various cultures mix (Lee, 2004:156). However, as noted by Gay (2003:30), these new communities do not facilitate the in-depth connections that are typical of existing communities. Rather, these unfamiliar groups can produce anxieties due to lack of genuine understanding of diverse cultures. Also, since the end of the Cold War, these communities generated intense conflict and continues to facilitate political violence as ethnic groups clash (Kymlicka, 1995:1). This tendency continues. Clashes between minorities and majority groups over issues of language rights, land claims or national symbols are on the increase, rendering multiculturalism highly contested on many fronts.

### 3.5.1 Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is becoming more multifaceted, as the theories and actual practice that feed into the concept are in constant flux (Basu, 2011:1308). Multiculturalism is defined differently by different scholars and is given varied institutional expression in different countries. Lubinda (2010:122) defines multiculturalism as a “theory of existence and a policy instrument to cope with the new challenges of increasing cultural diversity of society in the context of racial tensions and intercommunal conflict”. Parekh (2000:3) argues that multiculturalism refers to cultural diversity and the subsequent cultural differences between people that are reflected in the ways people relate to one another in their everyday lives among diverse cultural groups. Multiculturalism urges us to reconsider the arrogance that simply presumes superiority of one culture over the others, embracing and accommodating cultural differences within a society and treating diverse cultures with respect and impartiality (Phillips, 2007). Modood (2014:202) explains that multiculturalism “is a mode of integration [...] based on the core democratic values of liberty, equality and fraternity/unity”.

Multiculturalism is often described and defined within the context of other existing theories, for example, in the case of Taylor (1992) it is defined within the context of politics of recognition, in the case of Kymlicka (1995) it is portrayed in terms of differentiated citizenship or as in the case of Gozdecka et al. (2014) it is framed within the context of the rights of ethno-cultural minorities (Gozdecka, Ercan, & Kmak, 2014:53). However, according to other critics, much emphasis has been placed on cultural differences over other components in defining multiculturalism. Barry (2001:305) explains that the problems associated with multiculturalism are difficult to address, because multiculturalism is often misunderstood when the assumption is made that a group of people can be associated with a clearly-defined culture. According to Spinner (1994) referencing Barry, culture is but one dimension over which minorities might need to fight or consolidate their power. Other issues over which minorities might mobilise can include rights to certain territories, safety and security as well as historical grounds to claim power (Spinner, 1994:169–170). This does not mean that minorities do not value their culture – far from it. Linguistic and cultural survival are high on the list of priorities (Murphy, 2012).

According to Murphy (2012), critics such as Richard Ford (2005), on the other hand, have challenged the inclination to associate racial differences with cultural differences and claim



that racism is an example of how discrimination can manifest and that racism *may* focus on cultural differences. Murphy (2012) explains that for Ford (2005), racism is primarily motivated by observable physical features such as skin colour, facial features and hair type and that many racists are judgemental about these physical features of Africans and not about African culture as such (Murphy, 2012:16). With its varied concepts, however, multiculturalism carries the underlying principle that recognises and accommodates various cultural beliefs, practices, customs, languages, or lifestyles (Murphy, 2012). In this case, culture refers to a “body of beliefs and practices in terms of which a group of people understand themselves and the world and organize their individual and collective lives” (Parekh, 2000:2–3). As Kymlicka describes it, “a societal culture is an intergenerational community, more or less institutionally complete, occupying a given territory or homeland and sharing a distinct language and history” (Kymlicka, 1995:18).

Culture is a shared way of making sense of experience, based on a shared history, meaning that people do not live in a single homogenous social group, but are products of distinctive cultural backgrounds that provide the context in which different identities are shaped (Kelly, 2002). Wolcott (1991) argues that no “two individuals ever learn them [language or culture] in exactly the same way, no matter how similar their social environment” (1991:254), “that no two humans ever experience the world in the same way” (Wolcott, 1991:257). The learned systems are acquired through language, but no two individuals will use the same language in the same way, as is also the case with culture (Wolcott, 1991:259). Thus, language is context and culture specific and affects how individuals relate to others (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). As such, “every human acquires only one particular version [of culture] covering some aspects of a limited number of cultural systems” (Wolcott, 1991: 265). Culture and language are interrelated, as culture provides a background and framework for identity and though the identity can discard aspects of culture, identity can never disregard culture altogether and from this point of view there is a direct impact on identity when culture is for instance misrepresented (Kelly, 2002:7). With the increased ignorance of cultural differences, growing intolerance, together with increased xenophobia, climates of desolation and resentments are on the increase. Basu (2011:1309) explains that in order to understand how integration and social cohesion takes place in relation to culture and groups, it is necessary to analyse how power manifests between groups and also within groups.

In as much as nations are increasingly becoming multicultural, policies develop in response to diversity within different societies, but policies in different nations do not function the same everywhere. For example, in Europe, the policies are designed for mostly immigrants and refugees (Sieder, 2002). In the USA, policies generally apply to African-Americans and policies address aspects such as disadvantages and other issues that are related to race (Murphy, 2012:30), while in Canada, the policies regarding multiculturalism are to facilitate creativity and awareness as results of the interaction between various cultural groups and communities (Cornwell & Stoddard, 2001:11). The countries in Africa that have challenges to face in terms of multiculturalism are those countries that formerly had communities of indigenous people who were once marginalised during colonial rule (Cornwell & Stoddard, 2001:21). Countries like Zimbabwe, South Africa and Botswana, for example, include indigenous people whose rights were “swept away by the majority in the name of ‘democracy’ ... within which minorities had no real influence, ... [and] were destined to become a permanent minority” (Kymlicka, 2001:90). Such indigenous people “targeted by coercive assimilation policies and subjected to the rule of dominant powers without their consent” (Murphy, 2012:78).

For this research, multiculturalism was considered as more than merely “acknowledging differences and analysing stereotypes”, but rather as “understanding, engaging, and transforming the diverse histories, cultural narratives, representations, and institutions that produce racism and other forms of discrimination” (Giroux, 1993:13–14), challenging the discourse of domination or essentialism and drawing attention to the existence of many cultures. Giroux (1997:246) explains that multiculturalism does not refer to a fixed context that embraces a series of clearly defined and separated cultures, or to a blend of these cultures, but instead refers to a dynamic and complex context that can require an intercultural attitude of acceptance towards risks, relationships that can open up or close down and other unforeseen dynamics. In this sense, developing the notion of democracy around differences that are not exclusionary could provide the conditions conducive to critical engagement and dialogue in societies. Giroux (1997:237) argues that members of society should be aware of their own privileged positions and acknowledge marginalised groups that allows members to move between cultures, to accept cultural differences. Basu (2011:1311) states that schools are spaces where various cultures, histories and knowledges can meet and that this requires opportunities to discuss and redefine what the practice of multiculturalism really entails.

Schools provide a testing ground or battleground to examine the practices of social integration (Gordon, Holland, & Lahelma, 2000); as they do not “function solely as social and cultural institutions – enabling and disabling identities, place-making and belonging – but are inherently political in the constitution of their ideologies and understandings of diversity” (Basu, 2011:1309).

### **3.5.2 The concept of ‘culture’**

Multicultural education is aimed at supporting and extending the notions of culture, differences, equity, and democracy. Therefore, an examination of the theoretical concept of culture enables greater understanding of the development of multicultural education. Cultures can be shared, taught, abandoned, or adapted to new influences in any given society. There are varied definitions of culture, hence the noticeable lack of consensus on a single definition (Covertino, Levinson & Gonzalez, 2013). However, in a comprehensive study by Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952), they reported more than 160 definitions. They agreed that culture consists of patterns that govern and inform one’s behaviour and beliefs passed down generations through selected symbols, artefacts and values (Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1952). In their summary, they place emphasis on the intangible, symbolic aspect of group life as the most important aspect of culture, meaning that culture is the total sum of how people view the world and that which differentiates us from others. Geertz, defines cultures in terms of how people communicate and express meaning via patterns and systems of symbols that originated in the past and to signify inherent concepts and furthermore that people continue with this method to communicate with others, and in doing so they enhance their knowledge and adapt their attitudes and perspectives on life (Geertz, 1973:89). In the famous and highly influential essay ‘Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture’, in collected essays *The Interpretation of Cultures* (1973), Clifford Geertz presents his definition of culture as

essentially a semiotic one. Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning (Geertz, 1973:5).

Boyle-Baise (1999) referring to Spardley and McCurdy, define culture as acquired knowledge that informs individuals' way of life in the way they behave in society, or their interpretations of values and norms in any society as that which guide one's behaviour in ways acceptable to a given society. Gollnick and Chinn (1998) explain that culture informs the way people carry themselves in society and how they respond to issues and negotiate their way in society. Culture in this instance is seen as shared ideas that include the intellectual, moral and aesthetic standards that any society uses to communicate and render rules and guidelines followed by all group members in a given society (Fagbohun, 2014). It includes the way a community views or perceives its own context with the concrete artefacts associated with that culture, as well as the abstract characteristics such as values, attitudes, use of stereotypes and roles people typically play (Fagbohun, 2014:12). Culture is therefore visible and invisible, present inside its members and in the space around its members (Erickson, 2010:35). Culture encompasses the belief system, values, and symbols that a group of people share (Banks, 1999). The definitions above recognise characteristics of culture that are distinctive to different groups and these include language and verbal as well as non-verbal communication, a social structure that includes family members, society, scientific and religious knowledge, to name but a few (Gumbo, 2001:234). Bullivant (1984) describes the conditions or cultural programme that enable people to create their culture and these include a natural context or setting, a social context and the spiritual belief-system (Bullivant, 1984:3-4). He describes culture as an interconnected web of beliefs (traditional and contemporary) and values expressed through the way a group of people acts, the artefacts they value that a society passes down from one generation to another (Bullivant, 1984).

Cultures are dynamic, complex, and always changing. Language and dialects are important components of culture. The way in which people view and understand the world is reproduced in their language. The use of non-verbal communication is another important dimension of culture. These are played out in schools within and across different micro-cultural groups within a society and by extension at school. However, in schools, cultures are often perceived as static, unchanging, and continuous. Therefore, education can play a significant role in the politics of culture (Apple, 1993:222). Education provides an open space where various cultural identities are placed next to each other, can meet each other, can meet passers-by, and can negotiate (Giroux, 1997:250). Through multicultural education, schools

become mobilising sites to challenge the power hierarchies that exist in the communities as a way to equip the learners for better integration in their communities (Cahan & Kocur, 1996).

### **3.5.3 Multicultural education**

With increased ethnic, language and cultural diversity in today's societies the world over, schools are grappling with challenges of educating active and critical learners who are able to actively participate in a multicultural and democratic society. Multicultural education becomes a viable approach to create a collective community where individuals develop alternative practices to view the world. Despite multicultural education being a highly contested concept, there is an onus on all countries to enable learners to interact successfully with people from diverse cultures and accordingly multicultural policies must be developed to inform education in this regard (Moland, 2015:5). Considering multicultural education as a way to foster reform in schools, "is not a concept that lulls the mind, but rather one that prompts debates" (Gumbo, 2001:233). Its architects have argued that education that does not explore cultural differences that exist in a diverse society is guilty of robbing its country of a relevant education system as well as of the wealth that a multicultural society can contribute to its nation (Gumbo, 2001:233). Therefore, one of its major goals, according to its proponents, is to reform educational institutions to enable learners from different racial, tribal, and socioeconomic classes to enjoy equal educational opportunities.

Multicultural education is "a cultural democracy" for it encourages cultural diversity and social justice by changing the curriculum (Grant & Sleeter, 1993:5). It is used to describe a concept which involves working with learners from diverse cultural background, class, race, gender, or disability (Stuhr, 1994). The aim of multicultural education is to provide equal distribution of power, for all learners and to ensure that social equity is promoted while discrimination is reduced (Stuhr, 1994:175). Banks (1993) adds to this definition and describes multicultural education as a drive to regenerate education (Banks, 1993:3). However, in many nations multicultural education has mainly been part of social studies courses and other subjects have not benefited at all from multicultural education (Gay, 2003:31). It is much more than just a few lessons offered on ethnicity and diverse cultures but refers to a perspective on teaching and learning that is motivated by democratic values and principles (Bennett, 1991:11). Multicultural education encompasses ideas which allow learners (irrespective of their gender, socio-economic class, tribe, race, or culture) an equal

opportunity to learn in any school of their choice (Grant & Sleeter, 1993). In such an environment, learners become active participants in challenging social injustices by taking part in processes that unravel the unseen means that continue to scaffold discrimination in its various forms (Hajisoteriou & Angelides, 2017:273). This process can be difficult as schools and organisational structures make use of their accepted function to disperse objective knowledge to, at the same time, also disperse ideologies as part of what is seen as proven and true knowledge. (Chin, 2013:4). Knowledge that is taught as the absolute truth, prevents students from realising that information is always provided from a specific political perspective and can never be fully objective (Apple, 1979:89). Hence, Stuhr (1994) calls for the reformation of school social processes and the structure of the school population. Within this approach, schools are remodelled to teach from the perspective of justice and diversity and to encourage teachers to accommodate the variety of learners and learning styles with a corresponding variety of teaching approaches and methods (Stuhr, 1994:175). Multicultural education can be used as a process to provide opportunities for teachers and learners to realise how power structures manifest in society and how these power structures can be dismantled and transformed (Giroux, 1997:238). As Giroux (1997) posits, it is possible for schools to become sites where teachers and learners engage in critical dialogue from multiple perspectives that acknowledge cultural diversity.

The victim's perspective of discrimination is important in multicultural education and this perspective can be used as an access point to introduce morals and empathy, within the context of diversity, in the classroom (Hajisoteriou, Karousiou, & Angelides, 2018:17). The multicultural education proponents (Banks, 1994; Bennett, 1990; Gay, 1988; Nieto, 1992) state that including multicultural education in teaching and learning could encourage the academic, social and personal growth of learners and create an atmosphere where learners develop to their highest potential (Gumbo, 2001: 238). Although widely debated in Western societies, multicultural education describes attempts to assist learners in achieving their best irrespective of their cultural background, language, tribe, race, or economic status (Moland, 2015). While some scholars are wary about introducing multicultural education in various school contexts (Dietz & Cortes, 2011; Shome, 2012; Moland, 2015), Banks (1993), acknowledges that multicultural education developed as a result of the civil rights movement spreading Western democratic ideals designed to empower learners from diverse ethnical

backgrounds to become active citizens (Banks & McGee Banks, 2010). Moland (2015) explains that issues and contestations experienced in education in Western countries exist in African countries with different contexts, such as Nigeria and Botswana alike. Tensions between diverse ethnic groups about which cultures should be celebrated, exist in African countries.

Education that is multicultural provides a positive, conducive environment that values diversity. As Banks (2016) asserts, multicultural education is meant to offer both male and female learners “an equal chance to experience educational success and mobility” (Bank, 2016:3). Learners’ educational and vocational options are not limited by gender or age, ethnicity, or class. Multicultural education is meant to benefit every learner within the structure. As multicultural philosophers are becoming more interested in the way different people from diverse racial groups, class and gender interact and influence education, the emphasis placed on these variables varies considerably by different theorists (Banks, 2016).

There is a common consensus amongst various academics in multicultural education that for its successful implementation to accommodate for a diverse audience, institution and schools alike must make changes in the curriculum, methodology and materials availed to a multicultural-complaint environment (Lee, 2007), especially regarding the teachers and administrators’ viewpoints and behaviours as well as the underlying principles and values on which a school is basing its objectives and ethos (Banks, 2016:4). Many schools misunderstand multicultural education and assume that it involves changing the content of learning to include more content on the rights of women, people with disabilities, gays and lesbians and other minority groups (Banks, 2016:4). This fallacy is common, because many educators were immersed in curriculum changes which were demanded at the same time that the multicultural initiative began in the 1960s and 1970s (Banks, 2016:4). Other dimensions and components of multicultural education were largely ignored (Banks, 2016). Because it developed from the uproar of the civil rights movement of the 60s, the first response of schools and educators was established without careful considerations and planning (Banks, & McGee Banks, 2010). However, it has since developed.

The curriculum reaches far beyond ethnic studies or social studies as an educational approach in which learners’ cultural backgrounds are used to compile the curriculum and corresponding syllabus and school environment (Valiandes, Neophytou, & Hajisoteriou, 2018:379). Its main concern is a total modification of the institutional environment to better reflect the tribal and

cultural diversity of any given society (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998). Because of its broad spectrum, in one nation or society, multicultural education might be viewed as a curriculum that integrates practices of tribal groups; in another, ethnic groups and women (Banks, & McGee Banks, 2010). Therefore, educators must carry out a needs assessment to determine, create and sustain a multicultural education programme suitable for the school. As Sleeter and Grant (2003) recommend, there is a need for a total school reform overhaul with the aim to redesign ways to establish and introduce educational equity to the diverse and multicultural student body present in contemporary classrooms and schools for the proposed reform to be profitable. Banks (1993) acknowledges that indeed its implementations are contested and will be different in diverse context. Gutmann (2004:72) notes that multicultural education can be seen as an international drive that encompasses diverse cultural, social, economic and political contexts.

Gumbo (2001:234) asserts that multicultural education denotes a struggle against the ways in which education has internalised discrimination against minorities within its systems and to facilitate a teaching and learning context where learners from diverse backgrounds are given the opportunity to learn and grow in holistic ways, free from any form of oppression. Multicultural schooling affirms steps that ensure that cultural diversity is integrated across all subjects and allows diverse and marginalised cultures to take centre stage in the classroom, as opposed to granting this position to the dominant culture (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998:301). To accomplish a multicultural curriculum, various dimensions must be clearly conceptualised. Multicultural education needs to be defined, fully understood and then be included in the curriculum and implemented in the classroom, while never losing sight of its underlying principles (Banks, 2016:4). Multicultural education consists of four interactive dimensions, namely “equity pedagogy ..., [with emphasis on classroom instruction]; curriculum reform ... [taking into account both the teachers learners’ cultural difference, values and beliefs]; multicultural competence... [Focusing on appreciation of diverse ethnic identities, and challenging discrimination and marginalisation]; and social justice [challenging social hierarchies, oppression]” (Bennett, 2019: xx).



### 3.5.4 The dimensions of a multicultural education

The following discussions detail Banks's dimensions of multicultural education (1993, 2016). These dimensions include "content integration, the knowledge construction process, prejudice reduction, an empowering school culture and social structure, and an equity pedagogy" (Banks, 2016:4), (see Figure 3.1). *Content integration* refers to the incorporation of multi-ethnic and global perspectives into the traditional curriculum. *The knowledge construction process* involves developing some level of ability to do, to understand, evaluate and believe with a variety of approaches (Gumbo, 2001:238). *Prejudice reduction* means reducing negative attitudes such as forming stereotypes and misconceptions about other racial groups or cultures. The objective of an *equity pedagogy* is to change the hidden as well as the visible curriculum in a holistic way (Gumbo, 2001:238).

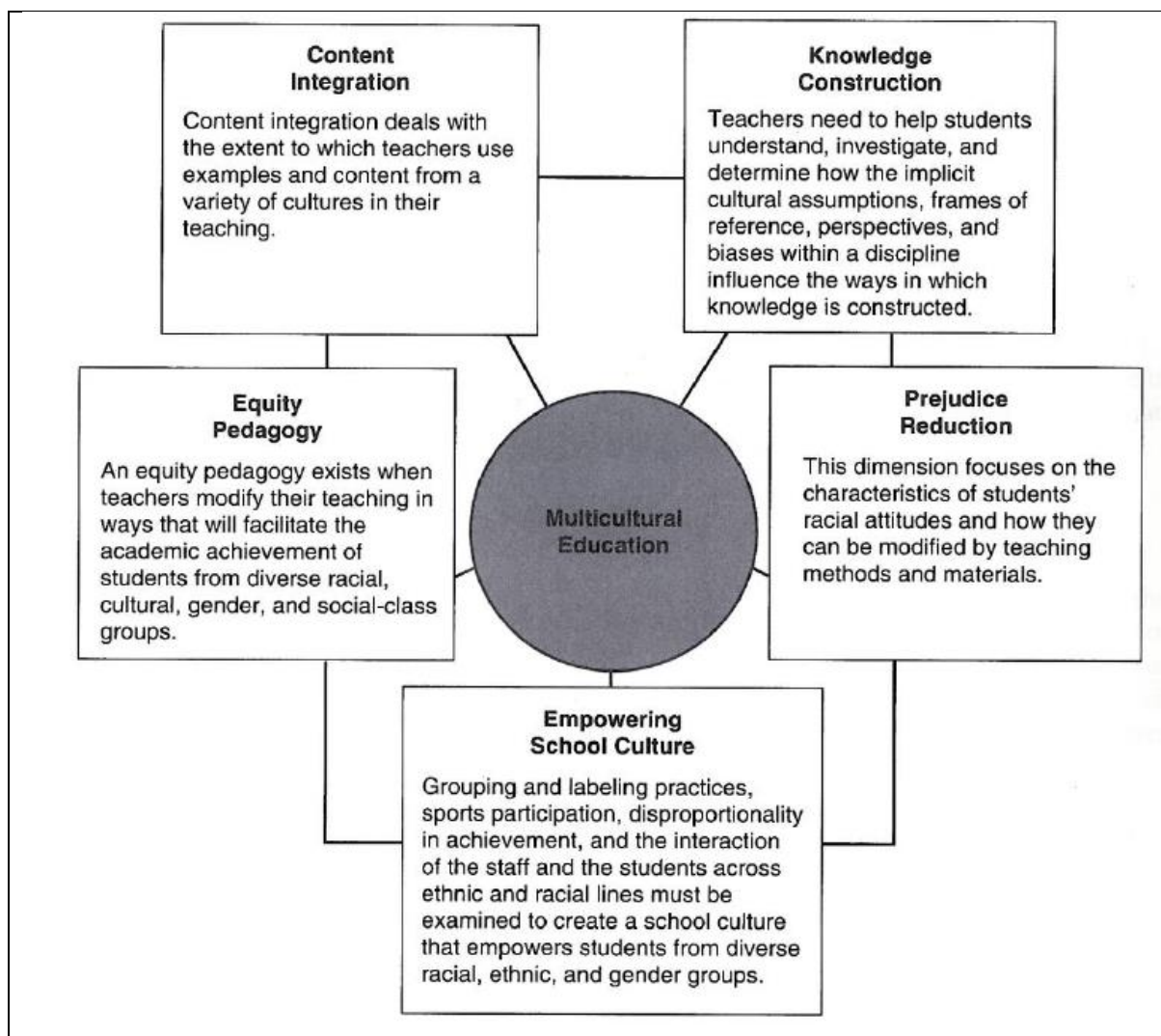


Figure 3.1: Dimensions of multicultural education (Banks, 2016:5)

With the increase in cultural intermingling, it becomes imperative for multicultural education to be considered in schools. As Gumbo (2001:40) observes, “It advocates an ideal of liberating those that are imprisoned in their own cultural cocoons and who do not want to hatch out to perceive God’s wonderful creativity in the microcosm of cultures.” Culture is essential, and viable education promotes, encourages, and cultivates individuals’ educational endeavours through their cultural point of view and to perceive the world as others perceive it (Gumbo, 2001). Teaching and learning should thus take into consideration the way society functions and aim to educate learners about differences and similarities where diversity exists. The proponents of multicultural education claim that it is a uniform movement to transform discrimination in education, however misconceptions do exist (Gumbo, 2001:237). To clearly understand the progress and achievements of multicultural education, Banks (1993:22) believes one must address the existing misconceptions by identifying and exposing them. These are discussed below.

*The perception that multicultural education is or is not for the ‘others’*

While the opponents of multicultural education view multicultural education as an entitlement of specific and known marginalised or discriminated against groups (Banks, 1993:23), its proponents view it as a call for institutional restructuring for all learners to gain equal opportunities, as Diaz (1992:24) puts it, “to increase educational equity for both gender groups, for students from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, and for exceptional students”. When viewed from the perception that it is for the ‘others’, multicultural education becomes marginalised and set aside from mainstream curriculum. Critics such as Arthur Schlesinger (1991) has perpetuated such perceptions by defining multicultural education as synonymous with Afrocentric education. However, multicultural education is not only focussing on specific groups that are oppressed (Banks, 1993:23), but is universal with broad public interest. Diaz (1992:26) asserts that if multicultural education would have a specific focus on certain cultural groups, it would fail as a nationwide movement in schools.

*The perception that multicultural education is opposed to Western tradition.*

While opponents of multicultural education claim that as a movement, it opposes the Western civilisation; proponents of multicultural education argue that it is anti-based to culture, hence not anti-Western. The system itself is thoroughly Western and well-known

authors, such as Langston Hughes, Toni Morrison, Maxine Hong Kingston, Rudolfo A. Anaya, and Piri Thomas writing on culture in the United States of America, are for instance proof of this (Banks & McGee Banks, 2010:244). Banks (1993), argues that multicultural education value the input of people who are working towards positive changes in society as an important aspect of education that can promote equal human rights for all by integrating ideas and knowledge with praxis (Banks, 1993:23); and advocates for the inclusion of principles of liberty and “equality and the realities of racism and sexism” in multicultural education (Banks, 1993:23).

*The perception that multicultural education will divide the nation.*

According to multicultural education opponents, it propagates a divided nation. The proponents of multicultural education defend the theory, stating that it is intended to unite a divided nation. Banks explains that the allegation that multicultural education will divide society is based on a false assumption, namely that society is undivided (Banks, 1993:23), but sociologically a nation consists of diverse subcultures or groups such as different gender, race and class (Banks, 1993). Therefore, in schools, multicultural education aims at creating cultural diversity within the concept of unity, so that unity does not exclude but accommodates the diversity of its members (Gumbo, 2001:237). Multicultural education advocates for equal power distribution and membership involvement from different cultures, creating a common civic culture that goes beyond cultural borders (Banks, 1993). Although it is still in the margins rather than at the centre in most schools, multicultural content has effected significant changes in educational institutions. Integration ensures ongoing patience and action to ensure wholesome relationships between different cultures (Gumbo, 2001:21), teaching children to learn from their history in order to appreciate the present to facilitate for better assimilation of diversity in a way that acknowledges the existence of the minority.

Banks posits that, education that is multicultural educates learners “to become critical thinkers who have the knowledge, attitudes, skills, and commitments needed to participate in democratic action to help the nation close the gap between its ideals and its realities” (Banks, 2006:146). If learners are members of a privileged group, this approach helps them to look critically at the reasons their group enjoys the social and economic advantages of the community and nation at large. While most societies struggle to establish peace amongst the different tribes, critically engaging how the diverse groups experience their social something

through multicultural education enables an understanding of the reasons behind tension (Moland, 2015:20). To work effectively within a heterogeneous learner population in schools, learners need to be conscious of cultural differences and inequalities in society. Schools then become sites with multiple levels and practices where these tensions are negotiated for better integration into a diverse society.

### **3.5.5 Multicultural education and art**

With increased migration, schools and nations are opening their doors and borders respectively to a more diverse multicultural audience. In schools, the different cultures are proving to be a challenge for teachers in their classroom environment. As a result, many of the learners belonging to these diverse cultures or groups become invisible and live without a voice (Graham, 2009:155). The rendering of the invisibility of difference and segregation creates a feeling of disconnectedness and misunderstanding (Graham, 2009). Educators are encouraged to seek new ways to face and defy the social stereotypes found in society. An alternative way to challenge this situation is the inclusion of art education in the curriculum. Multiculturalism and art education positions art as a way through which goals can be attained (Garber, 2004). Art can attempt to contribute to a necessary change in societies, but only if the way of teaching in class as well as the syllabus and curriculum, have a link with multicultural education and its underlying values and principles (Stuhr, 1994:177). Proponents of multicultural art education propose that an art education programme geared for social change should adopt the following:

[1] Democracy must be actively practiced in the school [...] [2] Students learn how to analyse their own situations [...] [3] Students learn social action skills that help them practice democracy and to analyse their own situations [...] [4] Students and groups are taught to coalesce and work together across the lines of race, gender, class, and disability in order to strengthen and energize their fight against oppression (Grant & Sleeter, 1993:57).

Visual culture plays an important role in the learners' lives in contemporary societies (Graham, 2009). Children today live in an age in which image, representations, and things essentially cultural have taken over everyone's lives. Therefore, art can be "taught as it is experienced in life, as part of a social and cultural context" (Stuhr, 1994:176). It is easy to find cultural difference in the images and visual representations that are everywhere in everyday

life (Boughton & Mason, 1999: xi). Art artefacts persuade people in today's society to make purchases, as well as see the world in an alternative way (Graham, 2009). Because the associations of visual images and differences are something with which children are familiar, art can in many ways function as a channel that can assist in multicultural education (Boughton & Mason, 1999: x). The artefacts created could function as symbols that serve as means of communication. Because it is communicative, art can assist learners to comprehend and view the world differently and tap into other aspects differently than before. Art is one way in which culture is learned, transmitted, maintained, and modified and has an advantage over other educational tools of language, as it is not limited by language or confined by words. It provides access to those children who have no proficiency in language skills as an added vocabulary for expressing their ideas. Furthermore, art's advantage to function beyond words, can easily be exploited within today's culture which is increasingly becoming visual and less dependent on text (Freedman, 2003: xi-xii). Art becomes effective because the impact of visual language is more immediate than that of written texts, especially in a class that is multi-ethnic, multicultural, and/or multinational.

Art education and artworks in multicultural education, "become the sites of knowledge, the texts for deconstruction" (Chin, 2013:12). They foster critical thinking in individuals and help them understand the ways in which belief systems are constructed, kept alive, what their impact is on everyday life and how they can support inequality (Chin, 2013:12). Chin, (2013:12) states that multicultural art education can provide learners with the skills to understand how symbols and graphics can reinforce stereotypes and otherness. Multicultural education can also encourage learners to uncover the biased perspectives and hidden discriminatory approaches of the artist (Chin, 2013:12). Art enables learners to become knowledgeable in developing contemporary issues and forms of dialogue, as it can also provide learners with new perspectives on lifestyles and cultural choices as opposed to having an unquestioning attitude and being afraid to explore (Greene, 1995:118). Art helps learners to see the world beyond the usual, get a better understanding of multicultural diversity as well as how to live and experience it (Wesley, 2007). Wesley (2007) affirms that art affords a safe space to learn about diversity in a world of difference, where difference is viewed as valuable and encouraged.

The transformation is facilitated via engaging personal and cultural behaviour across society, as well as in institutions such as schools (Freedman, 2003:1). The way institutions carry out their teaching and learning activities need to be “centred on concepts, events and issues that are presented from the perspectives of a diverse series of groups” (Chin, 2013:11). Teaching art can be used as an alternative way to encourage cultural tolerance, acceptance, and foster awareness amongst people from diverse backgrounds and nations. Chin (2013:11) maintains that these alternative accounts of reality are crucial to understand and counteract discriminating theories and ideas. Jones (1999:3) surmises that art can function as a means to unveil existing ideologies and their followers and at the same time to find the spaces where the rules and principles are based on equal human rights for all. Art can also facilitate an approach to multicultural education that considers the value of the end product, the importance of its sociocultural function as well as the artistic processes involved in the production of the object, opening up safe spaces for learners to explore issues pertaining to social justice, sociocultural diversity within their spaces of learning (Wasson, Stuhr, & Petrovich-Mwaniki, 1990).

Art education can enrich and assist learners in appreciating their position in history and find ways to challenge any inequalities that exist in their community. Artworks are produced within a specific social and cultural context. Thus, visual art as means of communication can be used to change, remake or protest against discriminatory and naïve perspectives (Kraehe, 2010:171). By examining the social and political context that influence the way they create their work, learners may understand how their identity and potential biases are influenced by their social context which in turn affect their world view (Kraehe, 2010). Transformative multicultural art education compels a culture which acknowledges tolerance, and active participation of diverse people with different and distinct cultural heritage (Collins & Sandell, 1992), because such cultural awareness may encourage learners to recognise “how our social position and the location from which we speak are connected to the way we choose to represent a culture within structures of domination and subordination” (Desai, 2000:128). The works of Bennie Searle, for example, offer the audience different interpretations of stereotypes and commonly known conceptions of visual culture in order to stir the audience’s understanding of what they think they know (Graham, 2009:156). Searle’s work resists colonialism and discrimination and offers diversity and the intricacies of culture, identity, and

an unexpected representation of the self in response (Cahan & Kocur, 1996: xxiii). Artworks such as those by Searle become an 'unofficial' bank of cultural knowledge as well as historical criticism and a visual salute to life (Cahan & Kocur, 1996: xxiii). From this point of view art can be both the result of a series of historical events as well as a way to inform the future in positive ways (Cahan & Kocur, 1996: xxiii). Rayna Green (1996:39) contends that art "lives to let us have different versions of visions and imagination, different versions of who we are, where we come from, where we are going and what we might be".

Competing versions of histories are about "power and who owns history—who owns the version that gets put in the books, ... who owns the version that gets taught in the schools" (Green, 1996:39). Therefore, schools become places where learners explore and negotiate these histories. Artists such as Bernie Searle use their work to talk about their histories through various media, such as spices, in negotiating identity and the politics of belonging. Through sounds, images, words, materials and other forms of expressions we can begin to see the struggles and ideas of other people's cultures. Boughton and Mason (1999: xi) point out that it helps learners to understand the fluidity of culture when they study art from various places and historical periods. Teaching art therefore requires educators to carefully consider the sociocultural issues at institutions of learning, because contexts in which the work is produced and viewed is of paramount importance in determining which forms and images will assist in meaning making for the learners exposed to the work (Freedman, 2003). Freedman (2003:50) explains that visual art is always being influenced by its space and context, as well as by the specific time period as context. Therefore, the use of visual images that are relevant to the context of learners (Mesa-Bains, 1996:33) signal to learners that they belong in their spaces of learning in as much as visual symbols or artefacts in a classroom create a dense environment that can provide supportive cues for learners. Mesa-Bains (1996:33) explains that using visual art that mirrors the everyday social life of learners will increase learner engagement as well as facilitate knowledge about their fellow learners who might be from different cultures. In such a case, as Freedman (2003:49) asserts, visual art education allows learners to associate knowledge from contexts outside school as well as from inside school with their subjects and in doing so, an alternative learning platform is created (Graham, 2009). Art multicultural education advocates perceive the approach as instrumental to social reforms. For example, Adejumo (2002:34), believes that if the culture



and art of minority groups are represented in class, learners gain more social awareness and will engage as informed citizens against oppression. Chin (2013:12) explains that if learners are given the opportunity to query the purpose of a source of knowledge and query who would benefit from that knowledge, they are in effect also busy with a process to query power relationships. Art education advocates for action in an imperative component of social justice and multicultural education, empowering context-specific and critically engaging learning experiences.

Art creates an open and free space that enables people to take part in the conversation as presented by an artist. As Sullivan (2012:145), writes “making art, encountering art, and using art, is considered to be crucial in understanding how we learn to make sense of the rapidly changing world around us”, while Quinn, Ploof, and Hochtritt (2012:51-52), state that social justice art education can be a process that facilitates new knowledge as opposed to learning already known information. According to Garber (2004:6) art education focuses on the connection between art and culture as well as on the connection between equal human rights and social change. Art can make complicated issues of inequalities of social justice accessible and relevant to both the artist and the viewer. Tavin (2003), argues that “the analysis and interpretation of popular culture should engage students in confronting specific and substantive historical, social, and/or economic issues” and at the same time to encourage them to engage with actual socio-political issues through art education (2003:200). Art does not only function as a vehicle for the articulation of sublime visions; it also takes those visions, fears, dreams and recollections and provides these with a visual metaphor, and also serves to criticise the society in which they were made. Kraehe (2010:172) says that critical multicultural art education provide learners with the means to be able to make up their minds about human rights issues in their own contexts and to be able to act on these newly formed mindsets. Ballengee-Morris and Stuhr, (2001:8) remind us that “all forms of education act as social intervention and the implementation of these forms reconstructs society in various ways”.

### **3.6 Art processes as pedagogy**

Art processes are “socially engaged practices that emphasise a new terrain of consciousness” that supersede simply appreciating and enjoyment of the aesthetic qualities of an art piece (Schlemmer, 2017:28). Art opens new avenues for learners to oppose discrimination in



society and in institutions, as well as to provide them with opportunities campaign for human rights and diversity in schools and society (Grant, 2015:58). As a means of teaching critical thinking, Chin (2013:12), suggests that learners query the nature of truth and facts by analysing what is presented to them and in effect to challenge Western truths and facts that support discrimination and power. The process of making the artwork can be an effective way to facilitate understanding of the other's context, to develop compassion and to generate discussions across cultural barriers that can in turn nurture a critical awareness of the stereotypes that exist in society (Graham, 2009:160).

Art processes that learners follow allow for alternative ways of experiencing and rendering their thoughts by producing art as well as to engage in critical discussions about their work (Schlemmer, 2017:15). As Schlemmer (2017:28) observes, art as way of research allows learners to respond to issues based on their own experience, movement, and mental abilities, as they collaborate and engage in the production of an art piece. This function of art can make it possible for learners to have open and critical discussions from various perspectives (Van Laar & Diepeveen, 1998:20). Art production and art appreciation do not merely lie in the final product to be produced, but also in the valuable insights learners acquire during the production process of the artefacts. From this perspective, the art-making process allows learners to find relevant and alternative ways for critical engagement regarding social justice issues, such as social inequalities, power hierarchies, discrimination, or prejudice (Schlemmer, 2017:13). The processes broaden the learners' world view and the means in which individuals come to know or understand their positionality. Barone and Eisner (2012:5) explain that art can change the artist significantly and that this process depends largely on the materials and processes of the effort of making art. It is in this process that art as a practice becomes a means through which to envisage and seek new portraits of people and places. With the materials in art, one can open up new spaces and negotiate emotions that were simply out of reach before, through what Maxine Greene (1995:43) calls stirring learners to be more aware, to be more imaginative and to understand and believe in what is possible, in her collection of essays *Releasing the Imagination: Essays on Education, the Arts, and Social Change* (1995). Working collaboratively in the classroom provides an opportunity for creating spaces for interaction that go beyond the enjoyment of the final product of an artwork completed and presented for viewing. The value and use of art processes in research therefore emphasise

the generation of forms of feelings that enable the understanding of the self, place or situation. It is not simply just another method of research, but rather a deliberate effort to find an expressive means that can support discerning mindsets (Barone and Eisner, 2012:7).

Art practices as a pedagogy enable individuals to secure a way to participate in the lives of others and situations studied. Mike Fleming (2012:17) quoting various writers, describe art education “as a “value marker” (Broudy, 1991:132), a “symbolic system of human understanding” (Goodman, 1976), a “powerful means of promoting re-creation” (Elliot, 1991:241), a source for “intensification and clarification of human experience” (Smith & Simpson, 1991:14) and “imaginative cognition” (Efland, 2004:751). The emphasis on feeling in the processes and art education can be associated with the emphasis on creating and self-expression. The essence of art making therefore allows people to express creatively that which cannot be put into words through the process of doing art. The intention to change society is an integral part of the art making process and art can be used as a tool to contribute content to, to initiate or encourage change in society (Dewhurst, 2011:367).

Hickey-Moody and Page (2016:1) contend that “the intersection of making and thinking is important”, as self-expression can be “constrained by the capacity of words to capture the nuances and subtlety of human behaviour” (Haseman, 2006:4). Action-centred teaching and learning takes place when learners are doing and making new content by using creative imagination and competencies (Moon & Hoffman, 2014:172), and should be considered in educating learners in contemporary societies. Through art practices, learners’ cognitive abilities could be enhanced and that understanding of the practices, teaching and art production might increase the awareness of what is entailed in critical engagement. Carter (2004:10) contends that “the language of creative research is related to the goal of material thinking and both look beyond the making process to the local reinvention of social relations”. As Eisner states,

Humans are sentient creatures who live in a qualitative world. The sensory system that humans possess provides the means through which the qualities of the world are experienced . . . [and] out of experience, concepts are formed. . . . Our conceptual life, shaped by imagination and the qualities of the world experienced, gives rise to the intentions that direct our activities (Eisner, 1993:6).

Barret (2007:1) proposes that to make art is to make knowledge and to philosophise all at the same time (Gardner, 1999:180-181). In other words, as a way of exploring the social relations of power through art process, it gives learners a visual language and voice without actual verbal communication. The creative process of art making is used to communicate experiences and ideal beliefs, giving a sense of identity and belonging. Meaning thus, is attained from the learners' experiences in order to empower, heal, protect or give balance to and/or create growth. Images, body movement and the dialogue in which one engages during and after the art-making process brings about healing and understanding of the self. Therefore, an artwork can be viewed as the methodology, the analysis as well as the result of a research process (Moon & Hoffman, 2014:173). McNiff (2014:1) asserts that art can extend beyond the limits of systematic and evidence-based thinking mediated in words, to introduce more possible meanings. In other words, the process of producing an artwork enables one to reflect on practice as well and brings out the hidden meaning of and knowledge about the issues under discussion (Nelson, 2006). Eisner (1999:149) contends that the effects of art can be to deliberately support and enhance academic ability. However, artistic interactions in the classroom could help learners ground their knowledge on relational aesthetics, as the artefacts that are produced are made by learners but can in return also have an influence on learners' ideas and experiences (Moon, 2002:140). As Nelson posits, research in

performance may be insightful in unpacking the cultural codes and conventions that reveal how social reality is constructed and knowledge is legitimised and circulated in the performance of everyday of life (Nelson, 2006:111).

Leavy (2009: viii) reminds us of how art has the ability to promote various perspectives, to overcome differences and to facilitate collaboration.

As the art making process is often inspired by the senses that stimulate imagination and creativity, art can be used as tool to facilitate creative and sensitive thinking (Eisner, (2003:343). In return this can, according to Greene (1978:182), create a variety of perspectives on the world and can even encourage learners to protest. Greene, a key theorist in the aesthetic curriculum, contends that art could enable learners to be more observant in everyday life and furthermore, that learners can become so involved in the art making process that the art becomes profoundly meaningful (Greene, 2001:6). Greene (1995) argues that the aesthetic curriculum requires an education devoted to the senses, to meaning making and

the imagination through experience. Eisner (2003:342) further elaborates on the link between imagination and visualisation and eventually the mindful meaning making process of art and affording learners an alternative means to develop critical thinking skills and communicating - through materials that are conveyed through sight, dialogue or movement (Eisner, 2003). As Eisner (2002) asserts, creating or perceiving with these materials requires one to think within a specific medium; visual art provides the media. Art education, as Eisner (1972) emphasises, is context-specific and ought to be viewed and appreciated within the specific context in mind. Participating and employing the art therefore enable learners to recognise that there is also a link between the everyday interactive nature of society and the determining historical processes and input or material that it receives and accordingly that art is relevant to historical as well as everyday social contexts (Kemmis & McTagget, 2005:565).

Cultural norms and social practices influence the activities in which learners engage and shape their opportunities and help them to make sense of their own lives (Agger, 2006:32). In this way, as educators we can create curricula that are meaningful and relevant to their experiences within the community. Creating space for dialogue is crucial to nurture the ability to navigate through various interpretations and viewpoints on the world (Leavy, 2009: 18).

### **3.7 Synthesis of the theoretical perspectives**

The literature consulted is synthesised here, highlighting the principal and linked concepts as generated from the reviewed literature in this section. The study is situated in Botswana's South East Region at a junior secondary school. The educational system still operates from the peripheries of the colonial educational system ideology. Aspects of colonialism still have an impact on the running of the educational systems in most African countries, and Botswana is no exception. English is the official language while Setswana is the national language, as was the case during the colonial period.

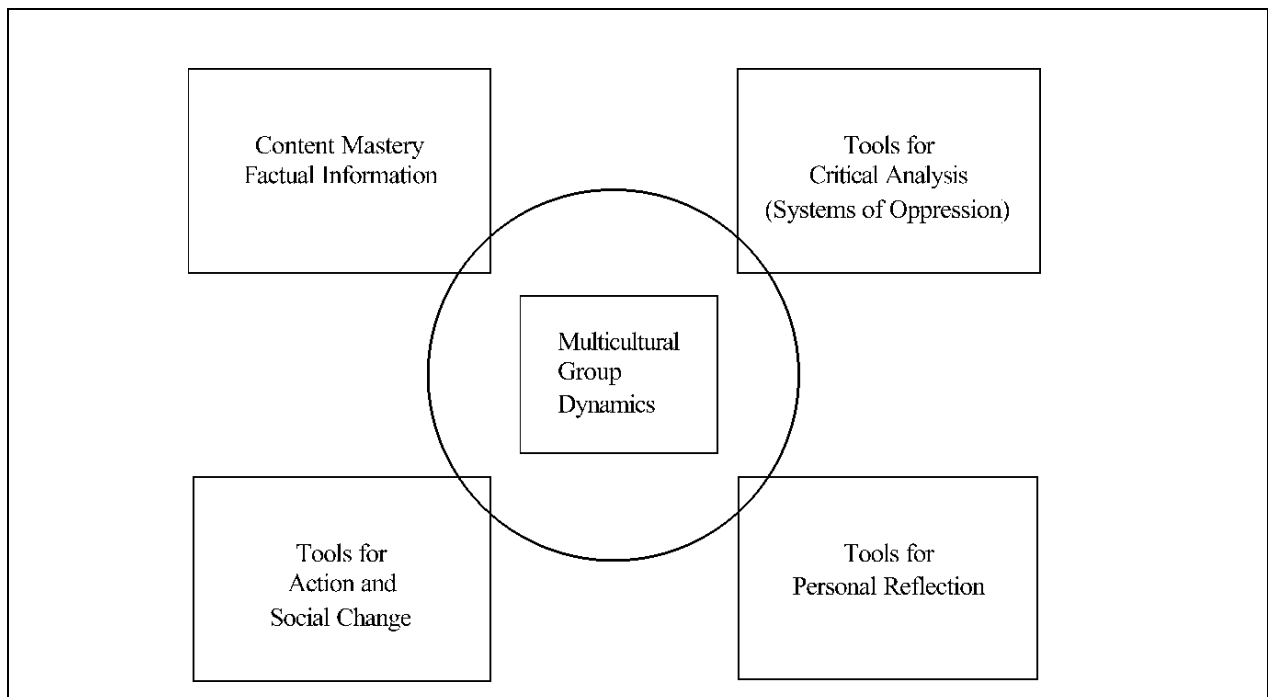
The colonialism perspective was specifically engaged, together with anti-colonialism and postcolonialism as the overarching perspectives, as their impact is still relevant in the contemporary educational system. The internalised inferiority complex cultivated during the colonial period continues to haunt the spaces of learning in institutions in nation states today (Dei, 2012a). Internalised racism, overt and subtle discrimination and marginalisation are

experienced in the school at which the study was carried out, despite being a public school with predominantly black learners from different tribes across Botswana and Africa and very few Asian learners. Power hierarchies that were heightened during the colonial period exist and influence how the diverse group of learners experience their learning spaces. The internalised racism has an impact on the way learners feel, think and act within the physical spaces in which they manoeuvre on a daily basis. The racial hierarchy of humanity in terms of skin pigmentation or complexion as propagated during the colonial period comes into play against those who are dark-skinned (black). They are targeted for their darkness by a “society where skin colour has always served as an excuse for whole catalogues of discriminatory policies and practices” and continues to function as an excuse for discrimination, stereotyping or labelling (Nyamnjoh, 2006:49). Marginalisation, humiliation of the ‘other’ and cultural superiority play out in subtle ways throughout, resulting in most learners suffering in silence.

The anticolonial and postcolonial perspectives can help learners uncover institutional injustices that persist due to schools’ failure to acknowledge the existence of injustices caused by the policies that govern the educational system. The two perspectives were incorporated into the study to offer direction for resistance, change and transformation, as recommended by Dei (2017), allowing learners to question oppressive policies that are disguised as equity. Following Bhabha’s (1994) concept of third spaces, learners are offered the space to speak and highlight the role of colonialism, how it worked and continue to play out in present-day societies.

The social justice and multicultural theories were chosen because they have the potential to change learners’ lives as well as transform them through participation. Social justice in education encourages learners to participate actively in their own education. It is about balanced involvement by all groups within society through democratic processes (Bell, 2007:1); encompassing inclusivity, and to acknowledge that all humans alongside each other can take an active part in the process to change society (Bell, 2007:2). In this study, this involves creating safe and open spaces to empower learners through learner-focused activities, dialogue, and analysis of power hierarchies within the spaces of learning, as recommended by Bell (1997). Social justice theory was infused in the study in order to assist in examining the “systems of power and privilege that give rise to social inequality, and encourages students to critically examine oppression on institutional, cultural, and individual

levels in search of opportunities for social action in the service of social change” (Hackman 2005:104), (refer to Figure 3.2 or the essential components of social justice).

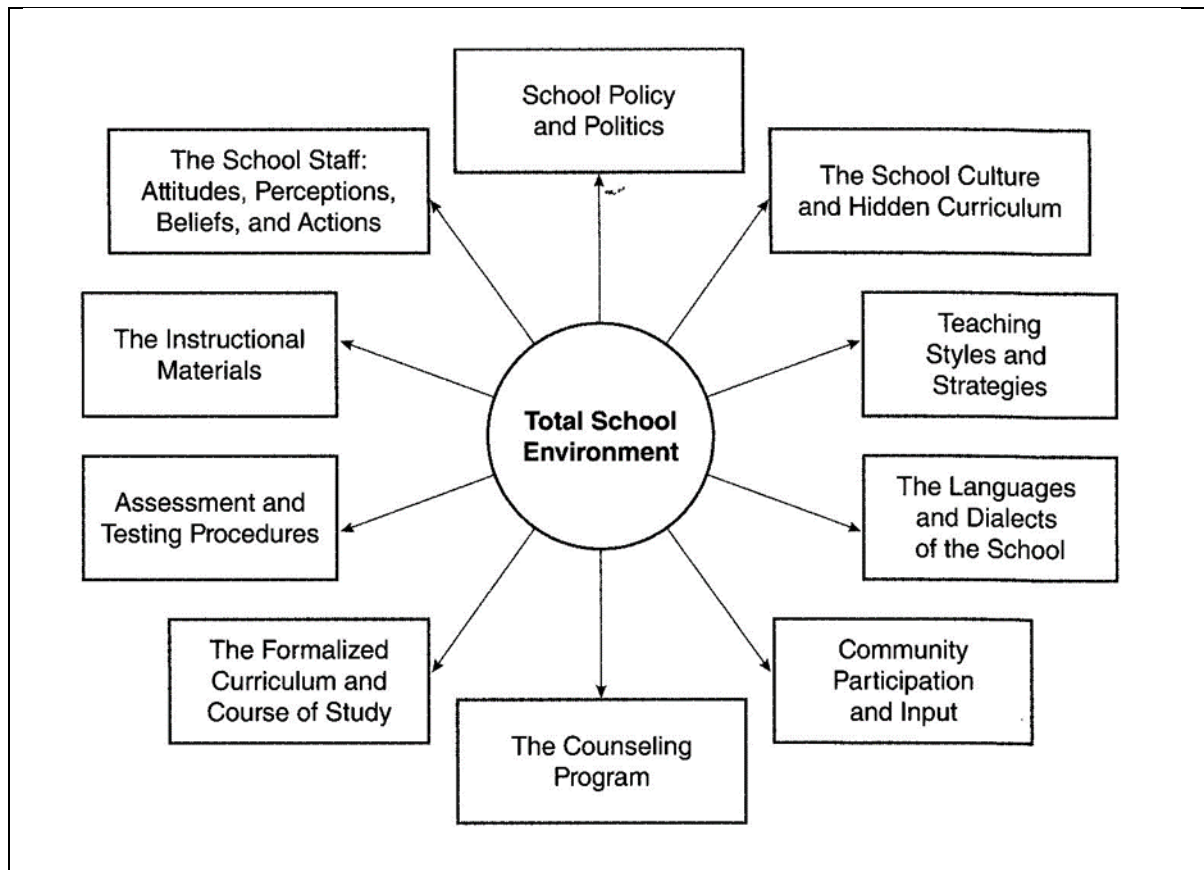


**Figure 3.2: Essential components of social justice education (Hackman, 2005:104)**

Fraser (2001) argues that social justice allows learners to take part in an equitable way as full partners in social interaction. For her, justice is not just about “group specific identity but rather the status of group members as full partners in social interaction” (2001:24), taking into considerations their social positioning in terms of their equity needs and avoiding misrepresentation and misrecognition (Fraser, 2001). In this study, the concept of social justice explored is based on the key theoretical developments through the lenses of Nancy Fraser, especially the politics of recognition and misrepresentation. This is because recognition, for Fraser, affords the minority groups with equal participation so that all individuals within a society are seen as equals who can engage with each other on a platform that does not allow discrimination (Welch, 2012:79).

Multicultural education theory and social justice assist in combating social exclusion and promoting inclusion and equal opportunity for learners who come from diverse backgrounds. Multicultural education theory opens interaction on discourses of race, class, gender, and sexuality within a socio-political, historical and cultural context. It proposes to afford equity

for learners from diverse backgrounds to participate on an equal footing (Banks & McGee Banks, 2004). However, for multicultural education to work, institutional changes should be made. These changes are relevant throughout the schooling system and includes the curriculum, teaching materials and teaching styles, but also the principles that guide the school's culture (Banks, 2016:4). See Figure 3.3 for the total school change that is needed to embark on a multicultural educational system.



**Figure 3.3: The total school environment (Banks, 2016:57)**

Art and art-making processes are used as an alternative way to allow learners to reflect and connect through dialogue and experiential learning. Art in this instance can be viewed as an alternative way of perceiving realities and value systems, giving learners the space to decentre dominant group views (Chilisa, 2012). As Leavy notes, “in arts-based research (ABR), there may be an effort to use an art form to include formerly marginalized perspectives in ways that jar people into thinking differently about commonly accepted stereotypes” (Leavy, 2017:28). As a pedagogy of critical thinking, art teaches learners to question and challenge existing powers of hierarchy through alternative ways.

## Chapter 4: Research methodology

### 4.1 Introduction

The principal aim of this research was to explore visual art as a tool for learners to negotiate social and cultural meanings and inform understandings of self. The research entailed investigating avenues in which art processes can be used to challenge prevailing assumptions about social constructs such as stigma, power, social control, and values with respect to belonging at school. The research questions were formulated as follows:

- a) To what extent can art processes facilitate safe spaces to openly engage in dialogue about stereotypes and stigmas?

The objectives of this study were to:

- a) identify the reactions of learners to projects that aimed to create safe spaces to openly engage in dialogue about stereotypes and discrimination in a case study at a community junior secondary school in Botswana's South East Region;
- b) explore visual art as a learning platform to elicit the creative imagination and to allow the learners to use their own words to describe themselves and their experiences; and
- c) establish what the reactions revealed about their psychological state of mind and own understanding of their selves.

The research approach and design, sampling, data collection methods and procedures for data analysis are discussed further in this chapter.

### 4.2 Design of the study

The sections that follow outline the discussion of the research approach and paradigm and research design.

#### 4.2.1 Research approach and paradigm

As this study focuses on uncovering the "qualities of entities and on processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured (if measured at all) in terms of quantity; amount, or frequency" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:10), a qualitative methodology was deemed appropriate for conducting the study. It was deemed appropriate because qualitative research is embedded in a process to understand and decipher experience and the accompanying meanings that are linked to that experience (Wilson, 2011:188). This method places emphasis on the value of investigation that can explore how and why social



experiences develop in order to generate meaning to individuals (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:10). It is “a situated activity that locates the observer in the world”, transforming it into a “series of representations [...] attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to the theme” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:3). As such, the researcher brings to the investigation certain philosophies, perspectives and beliefs that will influence the process (Guba, 1990:17) through which an interpretation of data is made. This means that because the researcher positions him- or herself in the study, reflections on the research is crucial and at the same time the researcher acknowledges the voices that were recorded as narrations were done and presented from the researcher’s involved perspective so that the researcher’s perspective becomes part of the research or study (Creswell, 2013:20). The objective of this method of research is to facilitate a deep understanding of the complexities generated by a specific context and how these relate to the issues under discussion (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008a:5).

My choice of a qualitative methodology was influenced by the wish to gain an in-depth understanding of actions and insights of the richness and complex nature inherent in learners of how they experience and negotiate discrimination and stereotypes; while identifying themes and theoretical structures that describe this process (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). According to existing research culture, race, ethnicity and social class are the dynamic drives that have significant impact on the relationships, structures and individual experiences of stakeholders and as a result research is a complex, multifaceted and multicultural process (Orellana & Bowman, 2003:28). Interpretive analysis was employed to gain an understanding on the way learners understood and experience complex cultural diversity issues and how significant art can be as a learning platform to negotiate discrimination and stereotypes in their places of learning and community at large. The main objective of studies using the interpretative method is defined as characterising and comprehending (*Verstehen*)<sup>14</sup> rather than a detailed motivation of human behaviour (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:270).

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<sup>14</sup> *Verstehen* is a term that stems from the” hermeneutic tradition of the German scholars Wilhelm Dilthey and Max Weber with phenomenology and emphasis on the “subjective understanding or interpretation” of human action” [...] Dilthey believed that the aim of the human sciences should be to understand “(*Verstehen*) rather than explain (*Erklärung*) human behaviour” (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:30–31).

#### 4.2.2 Research design

In an investigation as outlined above, it is important that there exists a relationship based on trust and open communication between the community in which the research is conducted and the researcher (Karnieli-Miller, Strier & Pessach, 2009:282). Thus, a case study research design was deemed appropriate for the experiential part of the research. A case study is a detailed account and analysis of one specific context, unit or event that is set in a specific time and place (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998:54; Hancock & Algozzine, 2006:9). Babbie and Mouton (2001) argue that the context in which the study is carried out is of paramount importance as well as the dynamics between the context and the specific unit that is studied (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:281). The case study opens up multiple views as it seeks to understand the complexity and layers of structures and systems in society and the comprehensive impact hereof on the subject or participants in the study (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:281). A case study is bound by some unifying factor focusing on signs of cross-cultural contact that holds the possibility to examine issues of cultural hybridisation (Cahan & Kocur, 1996). In this instance, it becomes “self-reflexive as students become aware of their role as cultural interpreters and ethical and social responsibilities accompanying that role” (Cahan & Kocur, 1996: xxi). A case study is therefore used to enhance our understanding of the dynamics between personal, social, cultural, political, and systemic factors and as such allowing the researcher to maintain a rounded and meaningful characteristic of everyday events (Yin, 2014). The advantage of case studies is their ability to reveal an in-depth, detailed account of the subject unit under investigation. Case study design requires more time compared to a survey design, and it does not generalise conclusions. However, the advantage of using the embedded case design is that the evidence this provides is regarded as more forceful, comprehensive, and strongly connected with real life experience, as opposed to survey evidence (Yin, 2014:57).

A case study research design, using several methods of data collection such as written reflections, artworks, and semi-structured interviews, was used to explore the research question. This exploration benefitted from the fact that often, the intervention being studied will have multiple and open-ended results and these are also explained in the case study (Yin, 2014:19).

With a case drawn from a junior secondary school in the South East Region of Botswana in Gaborone, seventy-five Art learners participated in the study across the forms at the school.

It was a single embedded case that provided a small sample size. Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009:49), argue that a small sample size is acceptable, because an interpretative analysis is used to understand all the issues and influences at stake. Rather than to prove a single hypothesis I chose to use an interpretative design after taking into account the socio-cultural context of the research problem, in order to understand how learners experienced their social spaces in depth, not for generalising beyond the case. The goal was to appreciate the complexity of the case, as it does not divorce the phenomenon from the context attending only to a few variables, but allows for the fact that many variables will emerge that may overlap with the research as well as beyond the scope of the research (Yin, 2014:17), hence the use of a purposive sampling design.

### **4.3 Sample selection and data collection**

Initially, theoretical sampling was used when I worked with the seventy-five learners taking Art as a subject, as the research was infused within the teaching syllabus. Theoretical sampling, according to Glaser & Strauss,

[i]s the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyses his data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges. This process of data collection is controlled by the emerging theory whether substantive or formal (Glaser & Strauss 1967:45).

The main reason for sampling was to create a representative group, with characteristics of interest found in the school population (Neuman, 2014:166). This is indeed significant way of getting to know more about your object of study and to confirm new explanations as they arise. Thereafter, learners (male and female) were selected purposefully to be participants in the next part of the study. Purposive sampling allows the researcher to made a specific choice regarding the participants or case according to the researcher's critical and informed perspective and understanding of the issue/s that are studied and where or amongst whom these phenomena are likely to occur (Silverman, 2014:63; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:378) These participants or cases are described in detail and then become representative of a larger social group (Arber, 1993). In this research the context was that of my school. Sampling gives one the assurance that wider conclusions can be made because "the degree of representativeness of a sample can be checked" (Arber, 1993:70).

The first reflections written at the outset of the research was done by a class of seventy-five learners to whom I teach art. The participants with whom I continued working thereafter were those whose parents had signed the consent form and were selected by virtue of their being in the art class and belonged to the nationalities present in the school from the initial sample. Purposeful sampling allows the researcher to adjust sampling and theory in reaction to what is happening in the research context (as opposed to what one would do with statistical sampling) and accordingly a few participants were dropped and only forty-three remained. The sample consisted of representatives from different tribes found in Botswana and international learners from Zambia, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Malawi, Uganda, Portugal, Nigeria, South Africa, and the Philippines. The participants came from diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds. The description codes for the learners are as follow: BF denotes black international learners, C indicates coloured learners, and A indicates an international learner from the Philippines while B indicates Batswana black learners from Botswana. The numbers following the codes indicate the number of learners in the respective category (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 provides an overview of the data collection methods, the number of participants, time frame, duration, and identification codes. The table is arranged according to the projects undertaken from September 2015 to end of September 2017 including the reflections written, art topics and projects done, interviews (both group and individual) as well as class or project observations accordingly. The coding is inclusive of certain parameters that the reader will be able to reference with ease in the manuscript.

**Table 4.1: Data collection methods, participants, time and duration**

	Method	Participants	Time	Duration	ID codes
1	43 written reflections	Form 1 and Form 2: <sup>15</sup> 42 black learners  Form 1: 1 black international learner 1 coloured learner	Sept 2015  (Outset of the 3-D project for Form 2s and 2-D project for Form 1s)	One 80-minute lesson	B22–B40 (Form 1 black learners)  BF3 (Form 1 black international learner) C1 (Form 1 coloured learner)  B1–B21 (Form 2 black learners)

<sup>15</sup> In terms of South African school grades, Form 1 is Grade 8, Form 2 is Grade 9 and Form 3 is Grade 10.

		Form 2: 2 black international learners			BF1 (Form 2 black international learner) BF2 (Form 2 black international learner)
2	2 semi-structured group interviews  <b>Group 1:</b> 10 learners  <b>Group 2:</b> 13 learners	Form 1: 9 black and 1 Black international learner 1 coloured learner  Form 2: 13 black and 2 black international learners	September 2015	20 minutes each	B22–B29 (Form 1 black learners)  BF1 (Form 1 black international learner)  C1 (Form 1 coloured learner)  B1-11-26 (Form 2 black learners)
3	Project work  Embroidery      Pottery work	Form 1: 23 black learners and 1 international learner 1 coloured learner  Form 2:  23 black and 2 international learners	September to October 2015	Five 80-minute lessons each form	B22–B40 (Form 1 black learners)  BF3 (Form 1 black international learner)  C1 (Form 1 coloured learner)    B1–B21 (Form 2 black learners)  BF1 (Form 2 black international learner)  BF2 (Form 2 black international learner)
4	Written reflections and project work	Form 1: 24 black learners 1 coloured learner 1 Asian learner  Form 2: 23 black learners 1 coloured learner	February to March 2016  During the collage project  During the craft project	Five 80-minute lessons each form	B41–B58 (Form 1 black learners)  C2 (Form 1 coloured learner)  BF4–BF9 (Form 1 international learners)    B22–B40 (Form 2 black learners)  BF3 (Form 3 black international learner)  C1 (Form 2 coloured learner)
5	Individual interviews	Form 3: 9 black learners 2 international learners	During the Junior Certificate project	January to August 2016	B1–B7 (Form 3 black learners)  BF1–BF2 (Form 3 black international learners)

6	Written reflections and project	Form 1: 18 black learners 6 black international learners 1 coloured learner 1 Asian learner	September to October 2016  During applique project	Five 80-minute lessons each form	B41–B58 (Form 1 black learners) C2 (Form 1 coloured learner) BF4–BF9 (Form 1 black international learners) A1 (Form1 Asian learner)
7	Written reflections and project	Form 1: 16 black learners	May to June 2017  During the sculpture project	Five 80-minute lessons each form	B59–B70 (Form 1 black learners)
8	5 individual interviews	Form 1 learners	June 2017	10 minutes each	
9	Written reflections	Form 1: 21 black learners	March to April 2017  Mask-making project		B59–B75 (Form 1 black learners)
10	6 observation sessions	2 sessions for each form, (1, 2, 3) while working on their projects	January to October 2017	4,5 hours in total	O2 (Observation form 1) O2 (Observation form 1) O3 (observation Form 1)
12	Written reflections and project	Form 1: 16 black learners	September to October 2017  During the weaving project	Four 80-minute lessons each form	B59–B70 (Form 1 black learners)

### 4.3.1 Data collection and capturing

Learners' reflections were utilised as the key source of data collection in the research study. The use of art projects, semi-structured interviews and observations of learners were employed for data collection. Below is a brief summary of the data collection methods used.

#### 4.3.1.1 Reflections

Reflective thinking and reflective judgments are crucial during the artmaking processes as they assist in creating unexamined knowledge (Burnard & Hennessy, 2006:7). Reflective thinking as coined by Dewey (1933) involves a process where participants regularly evaluate their experiences, ideas, and beliefs (Burnard & Hennessy, 2006:5). Dewey (1910:13) explains that reflecting thinking is challenging because it requires of the participant to move into mental spaces where ideas and assumptions were taken for granted and then it is required of

the participant to challenge these settled assumptions, which can be a disturbing process. The value of reflection lies in its ability to facilitate a process of creating (new) personal meaning within a specific context (Falk & Dierking, 2000: 41). This is done with processes such as reflecting on the self, that reveals specific aspect about the self and consequently can lead to better self-understanding (Yip, 2007:285). Yip (2007:285) notes that Habermas (1973) “described reflection as a process of critical self-determination.” While for Mezirow (1981), self-reflection implies that individuals take their socio-cultural values, beliefs and assumptions into consideration, and Schön (1983:62) posits that reflection happens over time and is contained by the time-period during which it is still positive to act on the situation with resulting changes. When reflection is occurring simultaneously to complementing action that is being performed, it is called “reflection-in-action (Schön, 1987: xi). The process of reflecting on the self can however never be isolated from the socio-cultural, political, and institutional context of the participant (Yip, 2007:295). Research has shown that reflection can improve learners’ abilities to study and learn and support their ability to develop their own morals and ethical views (Yip, 2007:258).

#### **4.3.1.2 Projects**

As a qualitative form of research, the definitive characteristic of arts-based research is that aesthetic or design elements should be employed within the investigation as well as the research article (Barone, 2008:29). McNiff defines art-based research as “the systematic use of the artistic process, the actual making of artistic expressions ..., as a primary way of understanding and examining experience by both researchers and the people that they involve in their studies” (McNiff, 2008:29). This process asks of participants to explore, to aggravate or to destabilise their ideas in an attempt to move towards improved understanding (Leavy, 2017:9-10) The research relies on personal experiences that moves the participant beyond words, on sensate experiences and on bodily explorations of place and in doing so these experiences trigger emotional and imaginative aspects that link to intellect and may open ways for the participant to react in a creative way to specific issues in society (Finley, 2008:143). The use of art projects was to draw out, to encourage interaction and to facilitate open-minded and new perceptions of problems in society in a gentle way, as well as to become more sensitive towards the oppressed and marginalised (McNiff, 2008:29). Leavy, (2017) contends that the use of art (projects in this case) for data collection can obtain data

that exists beyond words, including data that might have not have been anticipated at all (2017:20). She adds that art may assist in empowering learners as well as giving them the chance to express what they want to say without being worried about opinions of seniors or peers, so that unfiltered and 'new' ideas can surface (Leavy, 2017:20). For Wesley (2007:13), art making processes may be underestimated as a means to understand the complexity of everyday contexts. hooks (1995) posits that if individuals acknowledge that colonisation of the mind and colonisation of imagination have taken place, they will place more value on creative (hooks, 1995:4). Conceptualising bell hooks' arguments in *Art on My Mind: Visual Politics* (1995), Leavy (2017), argues that art can be used as a medium to express or communicate the (discriminatory) ideologies that exist within a culture (Leavy, 2017:208). Thus, art can be used to resist or challenge prejudice and discrimination and it can also become the energy that is needed to unveil and oppose ideas based on discrimination (Leavy, 2017:208). Gerber, Templeton, Chilton, Liebman, Manders and Shim (2012:41) explain that a series of interactive and narrative-based art processes can be used to explore "levels of consciousness and cognition in the intersubjective artistic matrix."

During the various art projects, learners provided for themselves most of the materials they used. Written reflections at the outset of a topic in the syllabus formed the basis of the projects done by the learners. As research have predicted, the projects became a way of taking learners out of their routine responses to everyday issues and problems and enabled them to gain new perspectives and ways to address oppressive and other serious conditions in society (McNiff, 2008:37). The processes chosen by the learners included clay work, embroidery, sculpture, weaving, mask making and applique as well as collage making. At the end of each production, learners were involved in class discussions, semi-structured interviews and wrote reflections. The aim was to open up spaces for dialogue and facilitate openings for diverse voices and examine the learners' knowledge and personal views.

#### **4.3.1.3 Interviews**

An interview is "a purposeful conversation, usually between two people but sometimes involving more ... directed by one in order to get information from the other" (Bogdan & Biklein, 1998:93). During my research, interviews were conducted behind closed doors in the Art department where participants spoke without intimidation or fear of victimisation. The purpose of the interviews was an attempt to gain subjective understanding of the



participant's experience, especially of those experiences that are difficult to observe, before they are offered academic explanations (Kvale, 1996:1; Patton, 1990:278). Oppong (2017:3) explains that in interviews people are often prepared to explain more nuances about a situation, because talking to someone is often a more natural and less inhibiting experience than to complete and plot oneself in a questionnaire. The semi-structured interviews afforded me more flexibility to explore interesting avenues that may arise during conversation that did not necessarily form part of the original interview schedule. These interviews provided participants with the opportunity to discuss issues that were relevant to all of them (Kvale, 1996:2). During the conversations, participants posed questions, interacted with each other as they answered open-ended questions in a bid to understand about their experiences, feelings, and their social spaces in their spaces of learning. The interviewer provides the necessary scaffolding in the conversations so that the participants can gradually formulate their own perspectives on experiences (Kvale, 1996:226). Follow-up questions were posed in order to get more clarity with emphasis more on their understanding of themselves rather than checking the accuracy of their accounts, allowing the interviewer as well as the interviewee to uncover new meanings regarding personal everyday experiences that are also relevant to the wider society (Brenner, Brown & Canter, 1985:3; Arksey & Knight, 1999:32).

The interview started with the question: "Can you tell me about your experience at school?" Interviews took between 10 and 20 minutes and were recorded.

#### **4.3.1.4 Observations**

Participant observation according to Denzin (1989:157-158) can be defined as "a field strategy that simultaneously combines document analysis, interviewing of respondents and informants, direct participation and observation, and introspection". The main features of the method entail the involvement of the researcher in the field either as purely an observer or as taking part in the activities of the day. Jorgensen (1989), as cited in Denzin (1989:226) amongst other descriptions, describe observation as a fact-driven and logical process of investigating that is without predetermined outcomes, that is accommodating and adaptive so that it involves regular redefinition of the issues at stake and which takes place in the familiar context of those being observed. Observations have been described as a crucial foundation for all research (Adler & Adler, 1994:389). Observations, as Adler and Adler (1994:389) posit, rely on what is familiar to researchers, their own knowledge and their own

point of view. As the study develops, researchers can participate in some of the activities as long as the participation does not influence how participants respond. Researchers who rely on interviews during data collection can also make use of observation when they comment for instance on the interviewee's body language, which can also add additional meaning to what has been said (Angrosino, 2008:161). The researcher "looks at the scene, literally or figuratively through a one-way mirror" according to Bogdan and Biklein (1998:81).

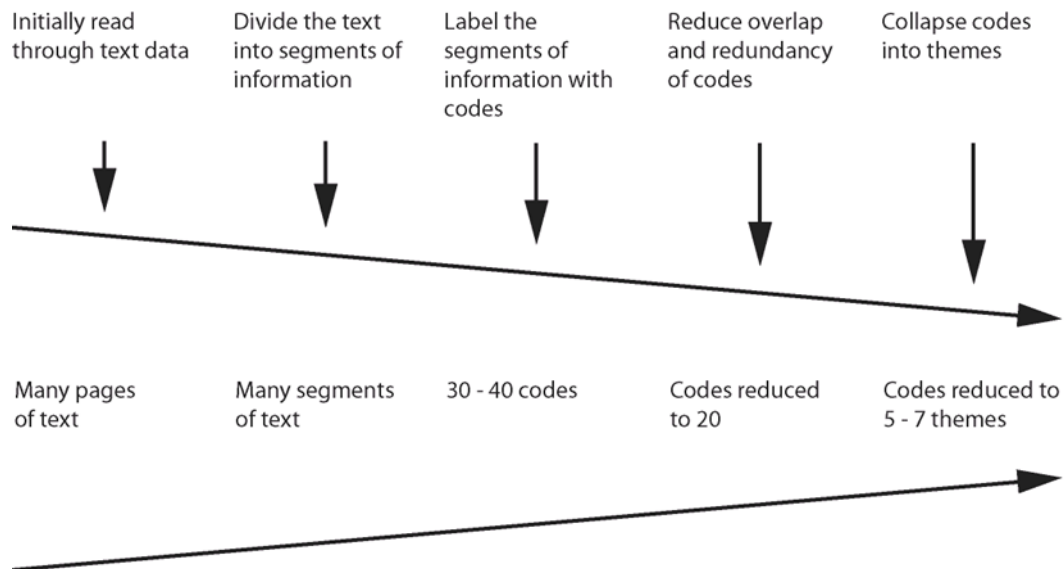
#### **4.4 Data analysis**

Qualitative research places emphasis on the context as behaviour is best noted and interpreted in its everyday context and as such providing the researcher with the opportunity to understand how people understand and embody their own lives (Bogdan & Biklein, 1998:57). In qualitative research, the world is viewed as "complex, dynamic, interdependent, textured, nuanced, unpredictable, and understood through stories" and is better understood "immersed in the details of a specific time and place" (Patton, 2015:13). Following in the footsteps of other research, the theories and models in this research will also structure and reflect the research analysis and interpretation (Merriam, 1998:48). Data collected from the seventy-five learners by means of written reflections, observations, interviews, and art projects was analysed using an interpretative analysis of data which is inductive in nature. According to Thomas (2006: 238), the inductive analysis refers to methods of analysis that produce concepts that are mainly based on reading processes of raw data. The data I collected was not, as would be the case of most quantitative research, set out to verify a hypothesis, but the research and data collection, as well as analysis and concepts I derived at, were developed as the research and data collection progressed (Bogdan & Biklein, 1998:6). As Bogdan and Biklein note, "theory developed in this way emerges from the bottom up (rather than top down), from many disparate pieces of collected evidence that are interconnected" (Bogdan & Biklein, 1998:6), making the interpretations of the participants' opinions and responses valuable. Madden (2010:10) explains that such exploration does not diminish but improve the research outcomes. This method ensures that the focus of the research is on the meaning that the participants bring to the fore, and not on the researcher's pre-conceived ideas that are based on existing literature (Creswell and Creswell, 2018:258).

Bernard (2011:388) contends that analysis is based on a process of finding patterns in data and determining the reasons behind the existence of these patterns. Coding, according to Saldaña (2013:7), enables the researcher to “organize and group similarly coded data into categories or ‘families’ because they share some characteristic – the beginning of a pattern”. The process entails firstly to structure the data into chunks which can be text or image, secondly to structure these chunks into categories with corresponding labels (Saldaña, 2013:7). These labels are often words from the raw data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:269). Labels are attached to similar segments of data to form subcategories and categories. Coding is a process that enables comparisons with similar data chunks (Charmaz, 2006:3).

Subsequently, coding determines the framework of the data analysis (Charmaz 2006:45). In this study, I coded using open coding, which refers to a process of organising raw data into chunks and comparing these chunks with each other to scan for patterns, repetitions and differences (Strauss & Corbin, 1998:102). The aim of open coding is to code without preconceived ideas about what the data might reveal while finding fitting codes for the data (Charmaz, 2006: 46 - 48) these may then become themes for further analysis. A theme becomes a means to classify repeating codes into a further topic (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003: 38). These themes are then used as headings in the findings sections of the research.

A theme is an “abstract entity that brings meaning and identity to a recurrent [patterned] experience and its variant manifestations” (DeSantis & Ugarriza, 2000:362). Thus, a theme brings together different parts of the data for better understanding (Saldaña, 2009). I searched and identified emerging themes from the participants’ written reflections, transcribed data from the discussions and interviews, thereby reducing the data to fewer categories. Saldaña (2009:158) notes that by organising data in categories and subcategories the researcher can gain control over data. Care should be taken to remain critical and to prevent forcing data into categories that are based on pre-conceived ideas of what the data holds (Glaser, 1978:4). Instead critical analysis is crucial as “coding furthers our attempts to understand acts and accounts, scenes and sentiments, stories and silences from our research participants’ view” (Charmaz, 2006:46); understanding, and appreciating both the participants’ experiences in their social spaces from the data collected as well as the researcher’s personal interpretation of the data. Table 4.2 illustrates the process of coding data in inductive content analysis.

**Table 4.2: The coding process in qualitative research (Creswell, 2005:238)**

#### 4.5 Ethical clearance

I obtained all appropriate and formal ethical clearance for my research study from Stellenbosch University, Departmental Ethics Screening Committee, and Visual Art Department. The institutional, regional, and Ministerial permissions in Botswana were granted before the commencement of the research study. I managed to obtain both participants' and their parents' consent at the outset of the data collection period. Parents and learners were given a chance to read and ask questions with regards to the study before signing the consent forms. Learners were informed that participation was voluntary with no financial benefits. They were also informed that withdrawal from the study was permissible at any given time without any personal consequences or negative repercussions for either the learner(s), researcher, or the school.

Participants were informed that their identity would be kept confidential and they were free to review or edit their responses from the discussions, interviews, and reflections or withdraw

their art projects from being used as data. As such, all names and information pertaining to their classes was removed from the data collected and codes were created to identify the participants. As a requirement by the Stellenbosch University Research Ethics Committee (Humanities) and the Botswana's Ministry of Basic Education permit, all data collected will be erased after five years of the doctorate having been conferred.

All data captured from the written reflections and recorded from the interviews was stored on a personal computer and backed up on an external hard drive. The transcribed information together with the data captured and stored electronically was kept under lock in a drawer which only I had access to. Ellis (2007:4) explains that ethical considerations acknowledge and honour the bond between the researcher and the data as well as between the researcher and the community in which the research was conducted. In my case these include personal confessions shared between the learners and myself, which could be detrimental to the learners' reputation and therefore were kept confidential and were not shared with other colleagues.

Due to the nature of the research, there was a risk of learners disclosing sensitive issues that could open up uncontained emotions. A guidance and counselling teacher was engaged to assist with managing emotions if such instances arose. Follow-up sessions with the school guidance and counselling teacher were made available if learners requested such outside the research group. The counselling sessions were privately organised by the learner and the counsellor.

#### **4.6 Validity and trustworthiness**

Qualitative research consists by definition of several methods to obtain data while the objective is to understand a complex situation in detail and from various viewpoints (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:5). A case study by definition relies on several data collections (Yin, 2014:17), and the use of a compilation of methods to collect data is used as a means to establish validity and truth (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

To ensure consistency and 'true' interpretation of what the participants said or reflected on, I transcribed all the recordings, analysed the data and coded themes from the reflections, and discussions alone. Remaining objective during the transcribing and analysis process is difficult. Thus, in order to minimize my own voice and bias and to ensure that I reflect the authentic

voices of the learners in the results of this research, I took into account the predictions and understanding I had of my participants during the pre-research phases when I was planning the study, before I started with the data analysis as well as during the process of analysing data (Bengtsson, 2016:8). Attempts were made to 'stay true' to the data and ensure that all relevant data was included in the analysis. As Bengtsson (2016:13) reminds us,

The key is not the choice of concept but how the concepts are discussed in relation to "truth" and "trustworthiness", since in qualitative studies there is no definite "truth". In general, the researchers are more interested in depth understanding of a specific issue and in showing different perspectives rather than aiming at singular truth and generalization.

I read repeatedly all the reflections, listened carefully and repeatedly to the recordings to cater for any misinterpretations of the data collected. Learners had the opportunity to review their information at any time in order to either confirm or deny my interpretations and observations as a way to obtain their opinions on the credibility of my interpretations or to perform member checking (Saini & Shlonsky, 2012:132). Member checking is a process which affords the participants an opportunity to review, confirm or comment on the researcher's interpretation of the analysed data collected during the data collection stage (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:274; Saini & Shlonsky, 2012:132;). Lincoln and Guba (1985:314) believe that member checking is crucial in establishing credibility.

I made an effort to talk little, listen more and record observations as accurately as possible. Throughout the data collection phase, I tried asking relevant questions to which participants were likely to have answers. The research was conducted within the learning spaces that were familiar to the learners. Focus was placed more on the processes rather than the outcome. I made an effort to begin writing early, visually presenting my data as much as I could. I chose to be open and vulnerable as I revealed biases and judgements I made (see Wolcott, 1994). Efforts were made to gain trust and establish rapport to improve the credibility of the study. The belief is when participants gain your trust they will volunteer sensitive and truthful information over time, rather than at the onset of the research. The participants were briefed on the procedures for the research. Efforts were made to consider all the complexities that surfaced during the course of the research and to address and understand issues that did not fit the emerging patterns (Trainor & Graue, 2013:91). However, it is also to be expected that all data would not fit into the neat categories and even the data that functioned outside

categories, were also documented (Chilisa, 2012:166). As I explained before, because the study was context-specific, the aim was not to generate knowledge that can be generalised, but rather to develop informative, and relevant accounts, hence the inclusion of detailed descriptions of the data as well as the natural setting to assist the reader in making comparisons to other contexts in the construction of meaning and concepts (see Guba, 1981); A detailed description of the context also enable evaluations of the quality of the research (Trainor & Graue, 2013:15). As mentioned earlier, I opted to use overlapping data collection techniques as a way of ensuring consistency and dependability (see Guba, 1981). The main sources of data include written reflections, class observations, semi-structured interviews and five art projects.

In this chapter I elaborated on the methodology utilised in this research. Given the nature of a qualitative study, a case study design was deemed suitable to investigate and understand the learners' experiences in their social space in their own words or voices, using multiple sources for data collection through documenting, studying, analysing and interpreting how they "construct and attach meanings to their experiences" (Patton, 2015:13). As Patton (2002:47) asserts, "Qualitative data describe. They take us, as readers, into the time and place of the observation so that we know what it was like to have been there". An inductive content analysis was used to analyse the data. Inductive analysis focus on the experiences of the participants, so that the participants channel the analysis according to their experiences (Azungah, 2018:391). I therefore do not maintain or assert that the knowledge acquired from one context will be relevant for another setting or in another time frame with the same setting (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:277), because the study was not primarily interested in generalisation. Rather, it was aimed at providing an understanding of how the specific learners experienced their spaces of learning within their social context. The results are presented in the next chapter.

## Chapter 5: Data and results

### 5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I present the data and the results from the analysis. Firstly, a selection of the data is presented which shows an overview of the (transcribed) comments and reflections made by the learners and teacher while working on the five projects, as well as images of the learners' artworks. Secondly, the results from the inductive content analysis are provided.

All data were collected between August 2015 and October 2017 at a junior secondary school in Botswana, where I teach. I collected all the data to ensure consistency in the processes involved and in the analysis of the data. My participants were art learners whom I taught during this period. The data were collected during the course of five specific art projects: the first project involved clay sculptures, the second project focused on the making of collages, montage, and mosaics, the third project involved embroidery and appliqué, the fourth project also focused on sculptures and the fifth project was a free project, during which many learners made masks. See Table 5.1 below for an overview of the projects and participants.

**Table 5.1: Overview of projects and participants**

	Project 1: Clay	Project 2: Collage, mosaic, montage	Project 3: Embroidery/appliqué	Project 4: Sculpture	Project 5: Free project
Year	2015	2015 & 2016	2015 & 2016	2017	2017
Form	2	1	1	1	1, 2, 3
Number of learners in class	25	23 (2015) 26 (2016)	12 (2015) 26 (2016)	25	28
Number of signed consent forms	15	12 (2015) 10 (2016)	12 (2015) 10 (2016)	11	28

As discussed in the methodology chapter, reflections were the main source of data collection from the seventy-five learners at the beginning of the projects and during the art-making processes and reflections about their final artworks. Individual and group interviews were then conducted with some of the learners during and after the art projects were completed.



The quotes are left in their original form from the reflections, interviews and written notes from class discussions and only corrected where meaning was affected. I also included my own reflections in the results, because all participants in this research were influenced by the projects in an entangled manner. My role as facilitator of the projects and the research process is crucial and integrating my own perspectives gives a more accurate picture of what happened.

## **5.2 Data presentation**

A selection of the data is presented and organised according to each of the five projects. These projects are briefly described and each followed by images of the learners' artworks. These are accompanied by short descriptions as well as (transcribed) reflections and comments on the art which were stimulated by the artworks.

### **5.2.1 Project 1: Clay sculptures (made by Form 2 learners)**

The chosen medium for this project was clay. The art syllabus for the Form 2 class required that learners acquire a pottery-making technique. Working with clay is a tactile experience, which can facilitate an opportunity for the artist to open up the unconscious world, especially for people who find it difficult to express themselves verbally (Sholt & Gavron, 2006). Learners were first divided into pairs and in these pairs had to introduce themselves and explain their aspirations. Some of the pairs consisted of learners who normally did not socialise together. The partners then verbally introduced each learner to the class. The presentations by the learners revealed that most identified themselves by their home and family life. They gave details of where they live, the number of siblings and in some instances the nature of their parents' occupations. When a person mentioned the tribe of the partner, the learners in the class belonging to the same tribe would applaud. However, some learners, especially those from the perceived minority groups, chose not to state their home village or their tribe. These learners preferred to state that they are from Gaborone (the capital of Botswana) and claimed that their home language is English. During the next phase of this project, the learners each received a lump of clay and were asked to each make a representation of themselves using the clay. During this process, they also had the informal opportunity to discuss issues raised during the class presentations. Hereafter follows a selection of images of these clay presentations:



**Figure 5.1: Clay skull made by Learner B2**

Figure 5.1 shows a pot in the shape of a skull that is the size of a man's fist and made from clay.



**Figure 5.2: Clay pot made by Learner B4**

Figure 5.2 shows a small pot made from clay.



**Figure 5.3: Clay guitar made by Learner B3**

Figure 5.3 shows a small guitar the size of a teenager's hand, made from clay.



**Figure 5.4: Small pot made by Learner B5**

Figure 5.4 shows a small traditional pot made from clay.

Below follows a selection of comments stimulated by these art sculptures:

Learner B3, who made the guitar, explained the following at a later stage during her lunchtime when she went to the art room to work on another project:

*You see, Ma'am, I stay with my mother and her new husband, and at times I stay with my dad and his new wife. I hate it that they are not together and I listen to music a lot when I'm not happy. I decided that I have two sets of parents, so I don't belong to any of them. I have step-siblings from both sides and I am in the middle, so I'm a Motswana and that's that.*

The learners from the BaZezuru tribe worked in a group and spoke in Shona. I had declared my home language as English and because of my name my learners had assumed I am Motswana. When I went around to check on their progress, they immediately switched to a dialect which they knew would be difficult for me to understand. Two learners commented:

*Ma'am, the Shona you speak is that spoken by the old guys, our parents, and this one we are using is not quite the same. In school we cannot speak the one our parents speak, because the other learners feel we are gossiping about them. So this one, it is neither Shona nor Setswana and because they don't get it they just ignore us. Besides, we were told not to speak Shona here. (B5)*

*This is not the type of Shona that the old guys speak, Ma'am. You speak theirs and this is ours, and we can speak it around at times. (B7)*

While working on the project, another learner commented:

*Ma'am, can you tell them to stop speaking in that language ... This is not their home where they can speak Sekalaka. Here we are in school. They might be talking about us. Tell them to speak English or something else. (B29)*

At the onset of the clay project as I gave out the clay, I reprimanded one of the learners (B1). I had realised that in the four weeks I had been in the school, B1 hardly attended my lessons. If and when he did, he would be sleeping, harassing the girls at the back or would excuse himself within minutes of arriving from their base room, never to return. The girls sitting in front were trying to get my attention to stop me from reprimanding B1 because, as I learnt later from the reflections:

*He is crazy Ma'am, this one you don't touch, just look at him because he hates female teachers.*

While I viewed his project, B1 asked:

*Why are you not laughing or shouting at this? [pointing at his clay penis]*

### 5.2.2 Project 2: Collage, mosaic and montage (made by Form 1 learners)

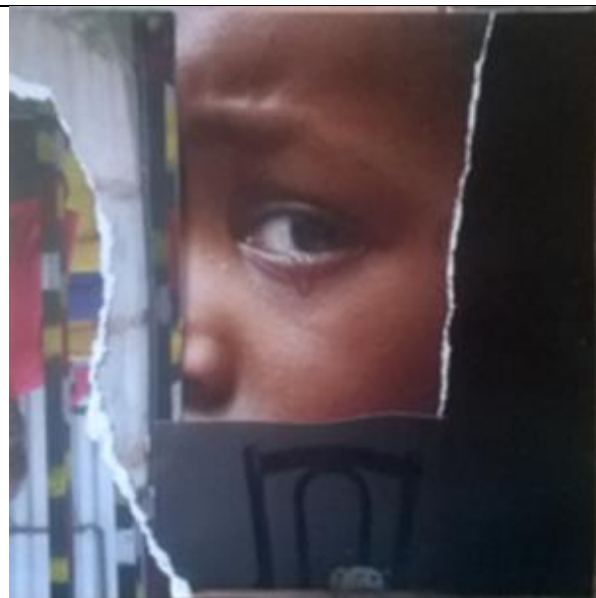
The collage, mosaic and montage project formed part of the prescribed module "Emerging Issues". This module covers contemporary and emerging issues that affect people in their daily lives, such as HIV and AIDS, environmental issues, violence, crimes, corruption, poverty, information and communication technology skills, gender issues and abuse. These can form part of the themes and subthemes of learners' projects. At the outset of the project, the learners reflected on their social and academic experiences in school and how they were negotiating their learning. Learners described how they experienced their places of learning

and compared their primary school experiences to those of high school life. After the reflection, they had to change their individual reflection into a visual expression. Most learners opted to make collages, and a few made mosaic pieces. Below follow examples of these collages:



**Figure 5.5: Collage made by Learner B46**

Figure 5.5 shows a collage of a three-quarter woman, partially covered and between two curtains with a wire in front. At the bottom and from another image are legs and feet added as though someone is hiding behind the curtain. There is a shack in the background with a person walking in-between the houses.



**Figure 5.6: Collage made by Learner A1**

Figure 5.6 shows a collage of a profile portrait of a child crying. The face is partially covered by black paper with a silhouette of a chair on it. It seems as if the child is hiding. On the left side of the collage is a white window curtain with touches of black, red, yellow and blue, partly covered by grey paper.



Figure 5.7: Collage made by Learner BF6

Figure 5.7 shows a collage made with a picture with a variety of cacti of various shapes and shades of green. A few faces of different people, including in the foreground the face of a crying girl, were placed across the cacti.



Figure 5.8: Collage made by Learner BF13

Figure 5.8 shows a mixed-media collage of a Setswana traditional hut made from the traditional foods that most Batswana eat. Beans and samp construct the hut and *morogo wa Setswana* (traditional Setswana pre-boiled leafy vegetable) are used for the ground, and the background is painted.





**Figure 5.9: Collage made by Learner B48**

Figure 5.9 shows a collage made from pictures and drawings of schoolgirls. Some of the girls are laughing at the schoolchild who sits in one corner, seemingly thinking about what the different girls are saying. Some are laughing at her, others are pointing and probably insulting a girl in the opposite corner. Different colours to correspond with the different actions and moods separate the various girls.



**Figure 5.10: Mosaic made by Learner B30**

Figure 5.10 shows a paper mosaic of a yellow island with a single palm tree on the island. A small section of the sun is in the left corner.



**Figure 5.11: Collage made by Learner B31**

Figure 5.11 is a paper mosaic of the map of Botswana, with the edges of the country traced by beans and the background made from soil pasted on the paper. Different colours grouped together represent the different regions within the country.



**Figure 5.12: Car portrait made by Learner B68**

Figure 5.12 is a montage with images of different cars that depict a face.





**Figure 5.13: Kgabo made by Learner B50**

Figure 5.13 shows what is meant to be a mosaic done in soil signifying the learner's totem *Kgabo* (a monkey) written at the top right-hand corner.

Below follows a selection of learner comments made in response to this project.

Learner C1 did not want her collage to be photographed. She had written the word 'race' using portraits of different racial groups and she did not wish to discuss the artwork during the lesson. She commented as follows in an individual interview that followed on the collage project:

*They call me 'le kurukuru' [a derogatory term used for coloured people] ... it's a very painful word. They started calling me that in Form 1 when I first came here because I am very light ... I think it's a bad word for coloured people ... I don't like it. It makes me feel sad and I try and ignore it.*

Learner BF8:

*Since I came to this school many things happened to me. One of them is when people judge us on what we have or do not have. Many people in this school do that and it feels embarrassing and it also feels like they think they are better than you.*

Learner BF7:

*There is racism<sup>16</sup> in this school, Ma'am. If only you could be a learner then you will see. It's too much.*

Learner BF6:

<sup>16</sup> Racism for her meant the different way learners are treated because of their skin complexion.

*... one of my classmates bought a label bag. When she arrived people started congratulating her, when they finished they started saying that I am left behind, I am the only one without a label bag and I should buy one. This incident happens all the time. Sometimes I have to ignore them. This affects my school work in many ways. I do not pay attention in class [and get] carried away by the thoughts of what they say about me.*

While discussing his artwork (Figure 5.6), Learner A1 stated:

*I also feel bad when primary kids call me Chinese and worse when it's adults telling me those stuff. It actually feels offensive because they'll say "Hey you Chinese ching-chong". What I do is just ignore them and act like I didn't hear anything.*

Learner C2:

*There are times when I talk to my friends then he just come out of nowhere and embarrass me in front of them by making fun of my teeth and saying funny stuff about me. I tried to ignore him but every time I talk he stops me. I tried to stop him but he just says sorry, then on the other day he'll do it again*

Learner B71:

*... at the tuck-shop every day when I go there I see him searching people's bags, clothes and trousers and will be taking money out of their clothes and most of the time X holds a knife to threaten them to give him money, all their money. ... will be smoking in the toilets and will be asking to beg not to tell.*

Learner BF7:

*Recently I've been made fun of by my peers and some of my friends because of my ear. My ear on the left is way different from the other one. My ear looks like it has two humps or a heart, that's what some people say. What really hurts me the most is when they say it looks like a buttock, sometimes they call it a plus one. Sometimes I really hate myself for having two different ears. There are times when I don't concentrate in class.*

Learner B27:

*Even some teachers judge me on my slenderness. Just a few days ago another teacher (my class teacher) wanted to send me somewhere, after a while she looked at me and in front of the rest of the class and called me a fool and everyone laughed. She also looked at me and laughed. Then*

<i>more people crowded around giggling, saying 'Is it true that she called you a fool?' I tried not to let it interfere but I almost cried and I decided to let it go, but up till now it still haunts me.</i>
<p>Learner C2:</p> <p><i>A few people call me names because I'm light [and] from Portugal and Sesotho.</i></p>
<p>Learner B49:</p> <p><i>But I would rather be called moZimbabwe than Mosarwa<sup>17</sup> gone!<sup>18</sup></i></p>
<p>Learner BF10 was trying to be identified as a Motswana (BF10 is light in complexion compared to the stereotypical complexion assigned to Zimbabweans):</p> <p><i>I'm not as dark as they are, so no one will know, hey but my sister is black, shame!</i></p>
<p>Learner B5:</p> <p><i>Aah! Ma'am imagine that someone calls me Mosarwa aah! That's too much. I'm better off as a Zimbabwean.</i></p>
<p>In the class discussion, learners commented on the works in figures 5.7 and 5.9 and discussed stereotypes related to intelligence and skin colour. They defended negative stereotypes with statements such as the following:</p> <p>Learner B47:</p> <p><i>But there is truth in stereotypes ... Makwerekwere are hard workers.</i></p> <p>Learner B51:</p> <p><i>Mme bone<sup>19</sup> [but] they like very bright colours, look at X's artwork ke moZimbabwe gakiri<sup>20</sup>".</i> [Meaning 'she is Zimbabwean, is it not'].</p>
<p>Learner A1:</p> <p><i>For me because I'm from [the] Philippines they automatically think that I am intelligent and when I get lower marks than them, they will tease me the whole day. Others feel that I am here to show</i></p>

<sup>17</sup> Mosarwa (singular) is a person from the Basarwa tribe found in the Kgalagadi region in Botswana.

<sup>18</sup> A Setswana word which means preference. It is not the English word 'gone' (leaving).

<sup>19</sup> This means 'But them'.

<sup>20</sup> *Gakiri* means 'is it not'.

*off my intelligence. Even the teachers always tell me that all Asians are intelligent so why am I not getting higher marks like them ... I am different, I am not them.*

Learner A1 (during a discussion when he was in Form 1 ) commented that:

*I feel out of place because I don't quite understand the language, norms and culture; yet I am expected to know how to do things like the Tswana kids.*

*When I fail a test, my classmates have a field day. They will laugh and the teachers will ask me like, What! You failed? Asian people don't fail. You must pass, you cannot come from so far away to Botswana and fail.*

Learner B46:

*Bullying is the worst, unpleasant, hurting and unattractive thing to do. Once I was bullied by someone in school because I act like a boy and sometimes I act like a girl. The person said I was half-half. The person kept on asking me if I am a girl or a boy, but I told them that I don't know if I am a girl or a boy. It really enters my heart because they would be making fun of my unknown gender. I feel people shouldn't really care about one's gender, because it hurts.*

### 5.2.3 Project 3: Embroidery and appliqué (made by Form 1 learners)

There were international learners in the 2016 Form 1 group and as these international learners did not readily join in the discussions, I decided upon another craft project as opposed to a drawing project, as the craft projects seemed to generate more opportunities for discussions. My choice of project was also influenced by the fact that the syllabus requires learners to create an embroidery or appliqué project, applying art elements and art principles. Learners had to bring their own materials (cloth, needles, thread and wool) to use in order to make a self-portrait. Most of the learners were able to collect and bring their materials, with some bringing enough to share with their classmates. Before beginning with the appliqué and embroidery project, learners taught one another different stitches that can be used in their project. By the end of the topic, learners were expected to have acquired the skill to make a variety of embroidery stitches in an artwork. As in the presentations of other projects, I present the photos of some of the projects followed by statements from the discussions.

These are some of the projects produced by the learners:



**Figure 5.14: Embroidery made by Learner B49**

Figure 5.14 shows a lioness embroidered using a fine, red embroidery thread. Another learner demonstrated the satin stitch used here before the project started.

Embroidery thread red and black on an A5 white cloth



**Figure 5.15: Embroidery made by Learner A1**

Figure 5.15 shows an embroidered lion using wool and embroidery thread. A variety of colours (red and green as complementary colours with black for the hair and two shades of pink for the details on the face) are integrated.

Embroidery on an A5 white cloth



**Figure 5.16: Embroidery made by Learner B51**

Figure 5.16 shows a springbok in the field. Appliqué of the animal standing behind a bush was done using letaise cloth (German print cloth).

Appliqué on an A5 white cloth



**Figure 5.17: Embroidery made by Learner BF6**

Figure 5.17 shows punch needle embroidery of a parrot on a sackcloth. The colour triad scheme of primary colours was used. The bird is perched on the branch of a tree.

Punch needle embroidery on an A4 sackcloth





**Figure 5.18: Embroidery made by Learner BF7**

Figure 5.18 shows a tiger that is embroidered in yellow and charcoal on a white cloth.

Embroidery on an A5 white cloth



**Figure 5.19: Embroidery made by Learner BF10**

Figure 5.19 shows an appliqué of a duck on a cloth. Various shades of green are used.

Appliqué on an A5 blue cloth



**Figure 5.20: Embroidery made by Learner B33**

Figure 5.20 shows an appliqué of a black rabbit at a drinking hole, a butterfly and green grass.

Appliqué on an A5 blue cloth



**Figure 5.21: Embroidery made by Learner B48**

Figure 5.21 shows an appliqué of a white rabbit on a black background.

Appliqué on an A5 black cloth



**Figure 5.22: Embroidery made by Learner C2**

Figure 5.22 shows an embroidery of a colourful butterfly against a white background.

Embroidery on an A5 white cloth



	<p>Figure 5.23 shows a colourful owl made from a 2-litre milk bottle and covered by crocheted wool. The owl can open up and close. Learner C1 was not in this group but became involved with the embroidery project as the other class was working on it. She opted to join the group when she found them working during her visits to the art room after school.</p>
<p><b>Figure 5.23: Crochet and plastic sculpture made by Learner C1</b></p>	

Below follows a list of comments and reflections generated during the project.

Learner B33 used a statement that could be perceived as conveying disgust at Zimbabweans and later apologised to me after being reprimanded (I am also Zimbabwean).

*Heela moZimbabwe ke wena o batla go ntena waitse didimala [You Zimbabwean you want to infuriate me! Be quiet"]*

*I am sorry, Ma'am, but I was talking to that boy; he always calls me 'motogo' [porridge] and I call him moZimbabwe.*

Learner C1 commented on the owl she had made – see Figure 5.23:

*[The owl] is very shy animal which you don't see always except at night. People are afraid of it because I think some tribes associate it with bad luck. I am not bad luck but I feel very bad when people call me some of these ugly names.*

*I keep quiet when they call me yellow bone, because I don't know what to do to them and hope they will leave me alone.*

Learner B34:

*X is always teasing me, he is my classmate. I always try to ignore him but he keeps on doing it. He calls me various names and calls me Ndebele because of how I look.*

Learner B42:

*He says that I am a Zimbabwean and calls me names.*

During the discussion of the project that followed overhearing Learner B33's conversation, learners reflected on instances they felt wronged, and as noted by Learner B27:

*When I told her to keep quiet again one of the science teachers came and pulled my ears and hit me behind my head and everyone laughed at me. When I told her that it wasn't me she said that she didn't care and she saw me talking and I told her I was telling these people to keep quiet but she ignored me and pulled me to the front with my ears. Now ever since then people have been laughing at me and calling me dirt.*

Learner B49 was describing the qualities his embroidery (see Figure 5.14) represented of him:

*I'm a lion with very sharp teeth. I will bite anything that threatens me along the way.*

#### 5.2.4 Project 4: Sculpture making with frameworks (made by Form 1 learners)

This sculpture project started with the learners reflecting on the mood prevailing in school. Learners in Form 3 had been caught with electric tasers<sup>21</sup> during the afternoon study where they had used it on one of the girls. Because of fear of victimisation, the students' general body had initially refused to speak out on the case. I initiated a conversation on what had happened, in the art class as a project theme. The learners wrote a reflection based on a statement: "What I dislike about my school". Their reflections were based on the abuse learners were experiencing at school while educators did not quite grasp the intensity of the situation. Each learner had to translate the issues into a visual artefact and because the topic

<sup>21</sup> A taser is a brand of conducted electrical weapons. It delivers an electric shock aimed at temporarily disrupting muscle functions and/or inflicting pain without causing significant injury. Electroshock weapon technology uses a temporary high-voltage, low-current electrical discharge to override the body's muscle-triggering mechanisms (Ordog, Wasserberger, Schlater, & Balasubramaniam, 1987:3).

being covered was sculpture, learners produced sculptures in the process. The initial stage was to work on the framework that they made of wire. Then they had to make the paper pulp in pairs to share. They supplied their own wire and all armature frameworks were made in class. Because not all learners were good at bending or joining wire, learners were encouraged to work together to bend, join and produce the framework. As the learners worked, they discussed the different forms of bullying in class and in the school, with many of them refusing to mention the perpetrators' names, only the incidents. Below follow images to show a selection of the artworks produced.



**Figure 5.24: Paper pulp sculpture made by Learner B47**

Figure 5.24 shows an action sculpture of a learner running. This sculpture is mounted on a board. She is carrying a backpack. The entire sculpture is painted black. It was made from newspaper pulp.



**Figure 5.25: Toilet paper sculpture made by Learner B70**

Figure 5.25 shows a sculpture of a learner who has been trashed into a rubbish bin head first. Only the legs are showing with some rubbish as well. The sculpture was made from two types of toilet paper rolled into coils. The paper was also rolled around the bin, while the legs are made from newspaper pulp. The natural colour of the sculpture is a result of the toilet paper used.



**Figure 5.26: Paper pulp sculpture made by Learner B65**

Figure 5.26 shows a sculpture of a girl with a rope tied around her neck. She is wearing clothes made from newspaper strips. The paper pulp used has a rough texture as though not much care was taken to make either the figure or the clothes. The rope hangs away from the body and the girl seems to be walking.



**Figure 5.27: Paper pulp sculpture made by Learner B71**

Figure 5.27 shows a paper pulp sculpture of a boy sitting on a bench wearing a tracksuit.



**Figure 5.28: Paper pulp sculpture made by Learner B69**

Figure 5.28 shows a paper pulp sculpture of a person who is either struggling to stand or falling over backwards.

Below follows a selection of learners' statements from the class discussions, semi-structured interviews and written reflections. I had requested the learners to comment and to write about their experiences of school in light of the taser wire incident that had been reported and on bullying in general:

Learner BF7:

*Good day Ma'am ... I am very pleased to have been given this opportunity to disclose what is tormenting me in this school ...*

Learner B66:

*Different things happen to different people, most of these are bad. Almost every day students, including me, are treated in a bad way.*

Learner B70:

*I made my sculpture, as a dustbin with a person thrown inside, in most cases when kids are bullied they feel less important, lose their self-confidence, self-esteem and end up feeling down. They end up quitting school because of this (see Figure 5.25).*

Learner BF9:

*They [the bullies] are doing bad things such as using drugs, drinking alcohol, insulting other teachers and they think it's funny.*

*Thank you for showing interest in the well-being of the class, as this has been traumatising us. There are some students in the school who are always threatening to beat or scold them ... I hope this comes to an end, as it shows that you care about our lives.*

Learner B45:

*X is an abusive boy who is molesting girls and has no respect [for] teachers like Mrs X ... because he thinks she is disabled, but that's not all, he was totally out of control because he can back-talk while the teacher is talking, he has no respect [for] teachers and is abusing other boys in my class.*

Learner A1:

*To be honest no place in this school is safe ...*

Learner BF9:

*One thing I hate is some of the teachers in school who are rude and always beat students. Teachers like these should be reported to the principal and be chased out of work because they don't know how to do their work.*

Learner BF10:

*X slapped me for no reason and then I asked him why he slapped me and then he pushed me away and then I asked him again, he pushed me away again and said: "Tswa fa" [get away from here] and I walked away in tears knowing that one day I will be the one to slap him. I say revenge is best served hot.*

Learner B55:

*To be honest no place in school is safe because anywhere X finds us, he will always take something. X sometimes comes to our class and threatens to pull out a knife on one of us.*

Learner A1:

*Even going to the toilet, we would have to go together.*

<p>Learner B73 felt that one of the learners in her class ...</p> <p><i>... makes me feel uncomfortable because when she gets angry with you she will threaten to curse you at her aunt because they are sangomas.<sup>22</sup></i></p>
<p>Learner B70:</p> <p><i>Bullying really makes people feel like trash, it can be emotional or physical.</i></p>
<p>Learner BF10:</p> <p><i>I want to protect myself from the bullies.</i></p>
<p>Learner A1:</p> <p><i>They always want me to give them money. If I don't then they take my food or tell me they will see me after school.</i></p>

### 5.2.5 Project 5: Masks (made by Forms 1, 2 and 3 learners)

In the last art project of 2017, learners made masks with “Difference” as the theme. The learners chose the material and the process they would follow, as this was the final project. A few chose to produce collages, mosaics and weaving pieces, but this section focuses on the masks that were made. This was open to Form 2s; however, the learners who visited the art room often were welcome to take part.

All masks were made from paper maché using the strip method. One of the learners did a systematic demonstration of how to make the mask. The paper maché was first casted on a balloon. After casting the balloon, it was shaped to look like the required animal and it was then painted at a later stage. Below follow images to show a selection of the artworks produced:

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<sup>22</sup> A traditional medicine practitioner with supernatural healing abilities, psychic insights and precognition. Sangomas communicate with ancestors, work with plant medicine (herbalism) and use the power of prayer for healing (Hall, 1996).



**Figure 5.29: Paper strip mask made by Learner B68**

Figure 5.29 shows a paper strip mask resembling a springbok.



**Figure 5.30: Paper strip mask made by Learner B71**

Figure 5.30 shows a black paper strip mask.





**Figure 5.31: Paper strip mask made by Learner B67**

Figure 5.31 shows a paper strip mask painted green and yellow with a varnish finish.



**Figure 5.32: Paper strip mask made by Learner B47**

Figure 5.32 shows a brown paper strip mask with a touch of green and grey.



**Figure 5.33: Paper strip mask made by Learner BF12**

Figure 5.33 shows an elephant mask made of paper strips.



**Figure 5.34: Paper strip mask made by Learner BF13**

Figure 5.34 shows a paper strip mask painted in two shades of grey.

## 5.2.6 Overview

As mentioned, the learners in the school belong to different tribes, and some are international learners. Consequently, they also have different home languages, although most speak English and Setswana at school. Table 5.2 below gives an overview of the learners with certain biographical information such as gender, nationality, tribe, home language and project participation. This table also lists the given identity codes that were used to protect the identity of the learners.

**Table 5.2: Overview of participants with signed consent forms and selected biographical information as well as project participation**

ID	Male/ female	Nationality	Tribe/ethnicity	Home language	Social language	Language of instruction	Years in class	Projects
B1	Male	Motswana	Mongwato	Setswana	Setswana	Eng. /Sets.	3	Clay
B2	Male	Motswana	Motawana	Setswana	Setswana	Eng. /Sets.	2	Clay
B3	Female	Motswana	Mohurutse	Sets./Eng.	Eng. /Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	1	Clay
B4	Male	Motswana	Molete	Setswana	Eng. /Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	1	Clay
B5	Male	Motswana	Mozezuru	Shona/Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	1	Clay
B6	Female	Motswana	Mokgalagadi	Eng./Sekgalagadi	Eng. /Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	2	Clay
B7	Male	Motswana	Mozezuru	Shona/Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	2	Clay
B8	Male	Motswana	Mokalaka	Kalanga/Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	2	Clay
B9	Male	Motswana	Mozezuru	Shona/Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	2	Clay
B10	Female	Motswana	Mokalaka	Kalanga/Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	2	Clay
B11	Female	Motswana	Mongwaketse	Setswana	Eng. /Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	2	Clay
BF1	Male	Zambian	Bemba	Bemba/Eng.	English	English	1	Clay
BF2	Female	Sotho	Sotho	Sotho/Eng.	English	English	2	Clay
B27	Female	Motswana	Mokwena	Eng. /Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	3	Collage/appliqué
B28	Female	Motswana	Mokgatla	Shona/Sets.	English	English	2	Appliqué

B29	Female	Motswana	Motlokwa	Setswana	Eng. /Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	3	Collage/a ppliqué
B30	Male	Motswana	Mokwena	Setswana	Eng. /Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	2	Collage
B31	Male	Motswana	Babirwa	Setswana	Setswana	Eng. /Sets.	2	Collage/a ppliqué
B32	Male	Motswana	Morolong	Setswana	Setswana	Eng. /Sets.	2	Collage/a ppliqué
B33	Male	Motswana	Mohurutse	Setswana	Setswana	Eng. /Sets.	2	Collage/a ppliqué
B34	Female	Motswana	Mongwato	Eng. /Sets.	English	English	2	Collage/a ppliqué
B35	Female	Motswana	Mongwato	Eng. /Sets.	English	English	2	Collage/a ppliqué
B36	Female	Motswana	Mokwena	Setswana	Setswana	Eng. /Sets.	2	Collage/a ppliqué
B37	Female	Motswana	Mongwato	Eng. /Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	3	Collage/a ppliqué
C1	Female	Motswana	Coloured	English	English	English	3	Collage/cr otchet
BF3	Male	Zimbabwean	Morolong	Eng. /Sets.	English	English	3	collage/ap pliqué
BF4	Male	Zimbabwean	Ndebele	Ndebele/Eng.	English	English	3	Collage/a ppliqué
B46	Female	Motswana	Tswapong	Setswana	Setswana	Eng. /Sets.	3	Collage/m ask
B47	Female	Motswana	Mongwato	Setswana	Setswana	Eng. /Sets.	2	Sculpture/ mask
B49	Male	Motswana	Moletse	Eng. /Sets.	English	English	2	Embroider y
B50	Male	Motswana	Afrikaans	Afrikaans/Eng.	English	English	2	Collage/e mbroidery
B51	Male	Motswana	Ndebele	Eng. /Sets.	English	Eng. /Sets.	2	Collage/e mbroidery

BF6	Female	Zimbabwean	Shona	Shona	English	English	3	Collage/embroidery
BF7	Female	Malawi	Chewa	Chewa/Eng.	English	English	3	Collage/embroidery
BF8	Female	Zimbabwean	Shona	Shona/Eng.	English	English	3	Collage/embroidery
BF9	Male	Zambian	Bemba	Bemba/Eng.	English	English	2	Collage/embroidery
BF10	Male	Zimbabwean	Ndebele	Ndebele/Eng.	English	English	3	Collage/embroidery
B48	Female	Motswana	Moletse	Setswana	Eng. /Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	2	Collage/embroidery
B65	Female	Motswana	Mokalaka	Sets./Eng.	Eng. /Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	1	Sculpture/weaving
B66	Female	Motswana	Mongwato	Setswana	Eng. /Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	1	Sculpture/mask
B67	Male	Motswana	Mokalaka	Sekalaka/Sets.	Setswana	Eng. /Sets.	1	Sculpture/mask
B68	Male	Motswana	Mongwato	Setswana	Eng. /Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	1	Sculpture/collage
B69	Male	Motswana	Mohurutse	Sets. /Eng.	Eng. /Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	1	Sculpture/mask
B70	Female	Motswana	Mobirwa	Sebirwa/Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	1	Sculpture/embroidery
B71	Male	Motswana	Mongwaketse	Setswana	Setswana	Eng. /Sets.	1	Sculpture/embroidery
B72	Male	Motswana	Mongwaketse	Setswana	Setswana	Eng. /Sets.	1	Sculpture/mask
B73	Male	Motswana	Mongwaketse	Setswana	Eng. /Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	1	Sculpture/mask
B74	Female	Motswana	Tswapong	Setswana	Eng. /Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	1	Sculpture/mask

B75	Male	Motswana	Ndebele	Ndebele/Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	1	Sculpture/ mask
BF12	Male	Ugandan	Batooro	English	English	English	1	Sculpture/ mask
BF13	Female	Zimbabwean	Shona	Shona/Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	Eng. /Sets.	1	Sculpture/ collage

### 5.3 Results from inductive content analysis

The first step in the data content analysis process was to identify key concepts. Inductive content analysis was used to categorise the data into focal points and themes without applying an analytical framework to the data. Below I discuss the main focal points and themes that emerged as most prominent and relevant to the research.

As the projects progressed, the data revealed that the participants were exposed to various forms of discrimination or were themselves discriminating against others. The behaviour types that resulted in discrimination manifested mainly as bullying. The bullying was mostly aimed at stereotypical views of tribal culture, social class and income, as well as sexual orientation. The stereotypes used were often intertwined and occurred in one or a variety of incidents, but ultimately contributed to the experience of discrimination of those learners being bullied. Accordingly, stereotyping is outlined as a technique used to discriminate against the other. The data are outlined and structured according to the subthemes, namely *tribal discrimination*, *social class and income discrimination* as well as *sexual orientation discrimination*.

#### 5.3.1 Stereotypes

According to the Cambridge Dictionary (Cambridge Dictionary, 2019), a *stereotype* is “a set idea that people have about what someone or something is like, especially an idea that is wrong”. The Collins English Dictionary (Collins English Dictionary, 2019), explains that *stereotype* can refer to “a tendency to think or act in rigid, repetitive, and often meaningless pattern”. In cultural studies a stereotype is a set of category-based beliefs about people outside one’s social group (Blaine, 2007). Various stereotypes are also spread across society

and can be either positive (“the elderly are wise”) or negative (“male drivers are aggressive”). In general, these categories allow for easier processing of information. Bordalo, Gennaioli and Shleifer (2014:1–2) refer to research within psychology that shows that while stereotypes “allow for a quick and intuitive assessment of groups, they may also cause distorted judgment and biased behaviour, such as discrimination and inter-group conflict”. They furthermore argue that because stereotypes rely on the differences between groups, they “are especially inaccurate when groups are fairly similar and differ only in the details”. The use of stereotypes can also be the reason why variety within groups is seen as less significant or important, while it has the detrimental effect that people do not consider the actual information, but rather “over-react to information consistent with stereotypes and under-react or even ignore information inconsistent with stereotypes” (Bordalo et al., 2014:3). The learner below explained this experience:

*Different things happen to different people, most of these are bad. Almost every day students, including me, are treated in a bad way. They are bullied, discriminated and hated because of how they look, act and speak. (B66)*

### **5.3.2 The use of stereotypes in tribal discrimination**

Tribal discrimination is an unequal treatment of people based on their tribal history and culture. The stereotypical views that motivated the bullying activities of learners in terms of tribal discrimination were often aimed at the believed hierarchy of tribes, shades of skin colour, traditional tribal first names and the use of certain dialects and languages.

There are, as explained in Chapter 2, various, tribes in Botswana (55 distinct indigenous groups) and there exists a hierarchy in terms of status among these tribes. This hierarchy is partially due to colonial structures, which placed certain tribes above others. Linked to the number of tribes is the fact that 26 languages are spoken in Botswana. During colonial times, newly formed countries were often also created in disregard of the tribal borders. The discrimination in the form of stereotyping that currently exists in Botswana is mostly between tribes, and not between races. Furthermore, some of the colonial constructs, such as the definitive relevance of skin colour and the superiority of certain languages and dialects above others, are still prevalent in discrimination practices in Botswana.

Most dark-skinned learners from the database found themselves regarded as Zimbabweans or ‘*makwerekwere*’ (see Chapter 2 for the definition), as they are commonly called. These dark-skinned learners are either from the BaKalanga tribe<sup>23</sup> up north in Botswana or they can be ‘foreigners’ according to the learners. In terms of the hierarchy for foreigners, Zimbabweans have been accorded the lowest rank, (Nyamnjoh, 2006) while their South African counterparts are considered better than those from other African countries. Just as being a Motswana has ethnic hierarchy, being foreign adheres to hierarchy and is a mixed bag comprising at least four groups: expatriates (mostly white); white people or *makgowa* (not necessarily expatriates, but mainly from the United Kingdom and South Africa); Asians (Indians Asians, Filipinos, mostly businessmen and women); and *makwerekwere* (black people from other African countries; some are expatriates and most are perceived as illegal immigrants) (Nyamnjoh, 2002).

The results from the inductive content analysis showed that discrimination among tribes, or tribal discrimination, exists at this school and this was delineated according to the stereotypes that emerged from the data. These stereotypes are based on the commonly perceived hierarchy of tribes and national diversity, of skin colour, of tribal names and of language/dialect.

### **5.3.2.1 Stereotypes based on the hierarchy of tribes and national diversity**

The data (as seen below) demonstrate that learners were suffering psychologically and physically due to tribal discrimination:

Learner BF7 confirmed that discrimination based on tribal heritage was prevalent at school. She used the word ‘racism’, but she refers to tribal and not racial discrimination. Her comment also suggests that this discrimination was extensive among learners and often unnoticed by teachers.

*There is racism in this school, Ma’am. If only you could be a learner then you will see.  
It’s too much. (BF7)*

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<sup>23</sup> One of the local tribes in Botswana. The learners are therefore Batswana citizens.



The following comments suggest that belonging (to a tribe) is important, but that it can count against the individual. See also the next section (5.3.2.2) on the link between tribe and skin colour.

*But I would rather be called moZimbabwe than Mosarwa! [A person from the Basarwa tribe found in the Kgalagadi region in Botswana]. (B49)*

*X is always teasing me, he is my classmate. I always try to ignore him, but he keeps on doing it. He calls me various names and calls me Ndebele<sup>24</sup> because of how I look. (B34)*

The learners' comments below indicate that you can use nationality (in this case that of Zimbabwe) as an insult:

*He says that I am a Zimbabwean and calls me names. (B42)*

*I am sorry, Ma'am, but I was talking to that boy; he always calls me 'motogo' [porridge] and I call him moZimbabwe. (B67)*

It was perceived that most of the discrimination towards Asians were because of the stereotypical perception that Asians are rich and do not belong in a state school. However, this Asian learner explains how he was discriminated against merely based on his nationality:

*I also feel bad when primary kids call me Chinese and worse when it's adults telling me those stuff. It actually feels offensive because they'll say "Hey you Chinese ching-chong". What I do is just ignore them and act like I didn't hear anything. (A1)*

### 5.3.2.2 Stereotypes based on (shades of) skin colour and looks

As Abrahams (2002:42) posits, "reference to oppression, exploitation and discrimination underlines the importance of social constructs while the phrase 'because of their colour of skin,'" draws attention to the fact that construction of stereotypes based on inherent physical characteristics mainly occur in societies where colonialism has been part of the history of the people (Prah, 2002). Shades of skin colour have been used as markers of hierarchy and status in the social order. See for instance Learner B34 above, who, as a member of the Ndebele

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<sup>24</sup> Stereotypically Ndebele are seen as very dark-skinned and they come from Zimbabwe or from the Bakalaka tribe in the northern part of the country.

tribe, has a dark skin – a fact that seems to be used in a derogatory way. The lighter the shade, the closer to white people, the higher the social status. This has many consequences for learners in schools. It has the potential to affect their self-esteem (Cokley, 2002) as well as the perception of their family and/or community (Kohli, 2008; Pyke & Dang, 2003) or their school performance.

For instance, Learner B49 was considered to be the darkest learner in the class with reddish pink lips, which earned him the nickname ‘the black child’. He verbalised how he was labelled based on his skin colour:

*When I was new at [school], I was frequently being eyeballed by Form 2s and 3s. (B49).*

Ironically, a light skin colour can also count against you, as in the case of mixed-race learners, also referred to as ‘coloureds’ in Botswana. This term originated in South Africa during the apartheid years and generally refers to a “person of mixed European (“white”) and African (“black”) or Asian ancestry, as officially defined by the South African government from 1950 to 1991” (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2019).

Recently there has been renewed calls from activists and academics in South Africa to abolish the term and to find a more inclusive term, as the view is held that this term is intensifying racial divisions in the country (eNCA, 2018). From the perspective of the tribal hierarchy in Botswana, coloured people rank the lowest. This is clear in the alienation voiced by Learner C2:

*A few people call me names because I’m light [and] from Portugal and Sesotho. (C2)*

*They made me feel bad, because I’m light-skinned and speak Sesotho I’m suddenly an alien. (C2)*

Learner C1, a coloured learner, emphasised that she was also judged on her skin colour when she joined the school. She explained this outsider status and voiced the psychological and emotional pain associated with this classification:

*They call me ‘le kurukuru’ [a derogatory term used for coloured people] ... it’s a very painful word. They started calling me that in Form 1 when I first came here because I am very light ... I think it’s a bad word for coloured people ... I don’t like it. It makes me feel sad and I try and ignore it.*

Learners BF7 and B27 explained that physical features that do not align with the norm can also be a reason for discrimination.

*Recently I've been made fun of by my peers and some of my friends because of my ear. My ear on the left is way different from the other one. My ear looks like it has two humps or a heart, that's what some people say. What really hurts me the most is when they say it looks like a buttock, sometimes they call it a plus one. Sometimes I really hate myself for having two different ears. There are times when I don't concentrate in class.*  
(BF7)

*Even some teachers judge me on my slenderness. Just a few days ago another teacher (my class teacher) wanted to send me somewhere, after a while she looked at me and in front of the rest of the class and called me a fool and everyone laughed. She also looked at me and laughed. Then more people crowded around giggling, saying 'Is it true that she called you a fool?' I tried not to let it interfere but I almost cried and I decided to let it go, but up till now it still haunts me.* (B27)

### 5.3.2.3 Stereotypes based on traditional names

Learners who have names that are foreign to the dominant group of Setswana learners could be more prone to being stereotyped and singled out. In the African culture, a name is of great importance. Most people are given names that are symbolic to events in the family or nation at large.

The following comments indicate the impact and extent of discrimination against traditional names:

*I feel like people don't take me serious because they always laugh when I say my name.*  
(BF9),

*I always made fun of his name [...] shame. Even the guys from my class do because it sounds funny. What does it mean anyway in Setswana?* (C1)

*My worst experience was when they made fun of my friend who is close to me. It hurt me because everyone always makes fun of his name. My friends promised they wouldn't make fun of his name. I am still mad at them and I am not speaking to them.* (C2)

#### 5.3.2.4 Stereotypes based on language

In multilingual societies such as Botswana, language use is an extremely complex matter, as revealed in this study. In school settings, learners are expected to “abandon their style of speech and learning and conform to the ‘correct’ language and culture” (Vang, 2006:24). In Botswana, the national language, Setswana, is considered at the top of the hierarchy of indigenous languages. However, learners come from different national and tribal backgrounds with corresponding languages and dialects and those outside the dominant group are stereotyped as outsiders and regarded as suspicious.

Learner B6 said:

*I would never be caught dead speaking that language. I can speak SeKgalagadi but imagine what the guys would say if they find out. ‘Aaah’ Ma’am you were listening ... I would rather speak English.*

Learner BF5 commented as follows during one of the discussions:

*Ma’am the Shona you speak is that spoken by the old guys our parents, this one we are using is not quite the same. In school we cannot speak the one our parents speak, because the other learners feel we are gossiping about them. So this one it is neither Shona nor Setswana and because they don’t get it, they just ignore us. Besides, we were told not to speak Shona here.*

Learner B29 said during the process of the embroidery project:

*Ma’am can you tell them to stop speaking in that language ... This is not their home where they can speak SeKalaka. Here we are in school. They might be talking about us. Tell them to speak English or something else.*

### 5.3.3 The use of stereotypes in social class and income discrimination

As explained earlier, Asian learners in the school are not considered inferior, but are discriminated against because stereotypically, they are considered wealthy. Hence, they are targeted by the local learners for their perceived social class and wealth. For example, the following Asian learner explained how other children targeted him by demanding money from him.

*They always want me to give them money. If I don't then they take my food or tell me they will see me after school. (A1)*

Another learner explained the perceived status attached to income:

*Since I came to this school many things happened to me. One of them is when people judge us on what we have or do not have. Many people in this school do that and it feels embarrassing and it also feels like they think they are better than you. (BF8)*

Learner BF7 revealed how learners ...

*... laugh at you because you don't have labels [the well-known and expensive brand labels] and make you feel alone.*

Learner BF6 explained:

*... one of my classmates bought a label bag. When she arrived people started congratulating her, when they finished they started saying that I am left behind, I am the only one without a label bag and I should buy one. This incident happens all the time. Sometimes I have to ignore them. This affects my school work in many ways. I do not pay attention in class [and get] carried away by the thoughts of what they say about me.*

### 5.3.4 Discrimination against sexual orientation

Understanding and addressing sexuality inequalities are mostly not attempted or addressed in schools. This is not surprising, as homosexuality or same-sex relationships have been illegal in Botswana (sections 164(a); 164(c) and 165 of the Penal Code on unnatural offences) (Republic of Botswana, 1964, Cap. 08:01).

Learner B46 confirmed this form of discrimination:

*Once I was bullied by someone in school because I act like a boy and sometimes I act like a girl.*

As such, it was interesting that Learner B46 was willing to write and reflect about her 'unknown gender', as she called it. Her collage, Figure 5.5, demonstrated and her written reflection explained that her real identity was not visible to the rest of the school community

and that she felt as if she was hiding behind a curtain the entire time. To exacerbate her discomfort, the school management had previously introduced a rule that girls wear skirts during terms 1 and 3. Learner B46 felt violated and was prepared to be punished rather than to wear the skirt. For most part of her Form 1 year in 2016, she was punished for wearing the wrong uniform and she continued to invent reasons that would allow her to wear trousers rather than the obligatory skirt. Figure 5.5 represents the dark space she negotiated every day due to differences in the way gender is performed within and outside school.

Learner B47's sculpture (Figure 5.24) is a representation of how she reacted to being bullied by one of the girls in her class. During our individual interview she reported that her classmate, B46, was abusing her emotionally. *Kana are wa mptla* [She says she wants me], said Learner B47 during the interview.

Learner B47 had joined the class in 2017 when they were in Form 2 and did not understand how another girl would want to date her. Learner B47 was not aware of Learner B46's sexual orientation yet and she felt emotionally abused. Learner B46 had approached her and proposed they dated and would wait for Learner B47 at the gate after school to get her response to the proposal. Learner B47 felt that she was always on the run whenever she saw her classmate. During the interview, I suggested I refer her for counselling, which she refused. She did not want to discuss the matter with anyone else. I had noticed Learner B47's unease during one of the class discussions, when her classmate (Learner B46) kept offering to give her money to photocopy some research. Learner B46 had also offered to take Learner B47's punishment on her behalf at one time. Therefore, when Learner B47 discussed why her sculpture was a girl on the run, I intervened and offered to send both girls for guidance and counselling.

### **5.3.5 Bullying as a strategy to target stereotypes**

Although not only used to target stereotypes, bullying was the strategy used to discriminate against stereotypes. Causes for bullying pointed to issues of class, gender and hierarchy of nationalities and tribes as brought to light by learners in the semi-structured interviews or their written reflection. Although, in order to protect themselves, the learners did not reveal

the perpetrators' names but they did reveal that in most cases teachers did not take action. Hence, they never reported some of the cases.

The bullying experienced by the learners was either physical or mental/emotional. Learner B70 explained her artwork (see Figure 5.25) as follows:

*Bullying really makes people feel like trash, it can be emotional or physical.*

Learner B65 – in her reflection and in one of the semi-structured interviews – stated that her sculpture (see Figure 5.26 in Chapter 5.1) was a suicidal person who was tired of being picked on by other learners. She was a brilliant learner who obtained very good grades. Other learners bullied her because she was intelligent and they felt she was a teacher's pet who always tried to please teachers by getting good grades.

The following comment also refers to how bullying can be physical and verbal, but this incident of bullying was initiated by a teacher, who felt the learner was making noises in class. The learner commented on how a teacher ...

*... pulled me to the front with my ears. Now ever since then people have been laughing at me and calling me dirty. (B27)*

The following is an example of physical bullying:

*First of all 'nna'<sup>25</sup> I once saw some boys carrying a taser an electric device that is very harmful to people's body. (B51)*

Another learner recalled an example of verbal bullying:

*X is an abusive boy who is molesting girls and has no respect [for] teachers like Mrs X ... because he thinks she is disabled, but that's not all, he was totally out of control because he can back-talk while the teacher is talking, he has no respect [for] teachers and is abusing other boys in my class. (B45)*

Learner B73 referred to psychological or mental bullying when she mentioned how references to spiritual beliefs are used to bully others.

*X makes me feel uncomfortable because when she gets angry with you she will threaten to curse you at her aunt because they are sangomas. (B73)*

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<sup>25</sup> Meaning me.

A *sangoma* is a traditional medicine practitioner with perceived supernatural healing abilities, but many learners believe that a *sangoma* is a witchdoctor who can cast evil spirits and the bully refers to the *sangoma* in her family who can curse others on her behalf.

According to the learners, the bullies are also bending the rules and often the teachers are victims of bullying as well. In this regard, the bullies gain power over the figures and systems of authority that should guard safety.

*They [the bullies] are doing bad things such as using drugs, drinking alcohol, insulting other teachers and they think it's funny. (B58)*

*Even going to the toilet, we would have to go together. (A1)*

*To be honest, no place in school is safe because anywhere X finds us, he will always take something. Bo<sup>26</sup> X sometimes comes to our class and threatens to pull out a knife on one of us.*

*Some students in the school who are always threatening to beat or scold them ... I hope this comes to an end, as it shows that you care about our lives. (BF9)*

*I keep quiet when they call me yellow bone, because I don't know what to do to them and hope they will leave me alone. (C1)*

*Good day, Ma'am ... I am very pleased to have been given this opportunity to disclose what is tormenting me in this school (BF7)*

*I always try to ignore him but he keeps on doing it. (B34)*

## 5.4 Concluding remarks

In this chapter I presented the data obtained from the participants over the course of the study. The results show that stereotyping among the learners exists and is acted upon without any considerations of how it affects others. With the learners exploring how art can be used as a platform for critical engagement, the study revealed that there exists a struggle for recognition. Art can be employed in developing awareness and conscious understanding of

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<sup>26</sup> Meaning those people like...



how social, political and historical contexts can be used to discriminate and marginalise those learners who operate from the margins.

In the next chapter, a summary of the theme and subthemes is briefly presented. This is followed by a discussion of the results and a brief examination of how art can facilitate and create safe spaces for critical engagement with social issues that learners face on a daily basis.

## Chapter 6: Discussion of results

### 6.1 Introduction

In spite of Botswana's official national vision that values multiculturalism and supports an educational system that encourages a tolerance for difference and diversity among people (Republic of Botswana, 1998:73), the results from the data analysis point towards the opposite – to an intolerance for diversity and the culture of the other. As part of the process to address this intolerance, the focus of the study was to explore the extent to which art processes can facilitate safe spaces to openly engage in dialogue on stereotypes and discrimination in a case study at a community junior secondary school in Botswana's South East Region. The study's focus was to explore a meeting place for two opposing processes: between rigid, set and category-based ideas and judgements associated with stereotypes on the one hand and ongoing, open-ended, non-judging engagement on the other hand. Within this research, this meeting place was the art classroom. Through five art projects spread over three years, data were collected and the analysis indicated that learners suffered from discrimination as various stereotypical ideas were held of them (see Chapter 5).

### 6.2 The use of stereotypes to promote (tribal) discrimination

The most frequently occurring and prominent stereotypes were aimed at tribal attributes. Botswana currently has eight major tribes recognised in the Chieftainship Act (The Chieftainship Act, Republic of Botswana, 1966a, Cap. 41:01) and more minority tribes, and tribal discrimination is rife.

In the same way that Learner BF7 (see Section 5.3.2.1) mistook tribal discrimination for racial discrimination, the definitions of and distinctions between race, tribe and ethnicity are often blurred. The term 'race' refers to certain similar biological traits and links to similar physical characteristics concentrated in a group or category of humankind, though all these groups belong to a single species, *Homo sapiens* (UNESCO, 2017). Even though there are genetic variations between individuals, 'race' is not discernible in the human genome and 99% of genetic material is similar between all humans (Harvard University, 2012). 'Ethnicity' is also

not discernible in the human genome. Ethnicity is often regarded as a synonym for ‘race’, but in this research, ‘ethnicity’ (as opposed to the emphasis on physical differences embodied by the word ‘race’) refers to cultural differentiation and expression and the term ‘ethnicity’ refers to groups of people that share national, tribal, religious, linguistic, historical and/or cultural backgrounds (Merriam-Webster, 2020; Little, 2013).

According to the Cambridge Dictionary (2019), a ‘tribe’ is a “group of related families, who live in the same area and share the same language, culture, and history”. In anthropology, ‘tribe’ is defined as “a notional form of human social organization [...], having temporary or permanent political integration, and defined by traditions of common descent, language, culture, and ideology” (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2019). In this regard, the concept ‘tribe’ combines the characteristics of both ‘race’ (physical features) and ‘ethnicity’ (history, culture and language). Therefore, physical features such as skin colour as well as cultural features such as language and dialect are characteristics of members of the same tribe. Furthermore, in colonial times tribes functioned as “politically driven”, “totalising” identities (Mamdani, 2012b: 8). From this perspective the definition of ‘tribe’ is overlapping or parallel to that of ‘race’ and ‘ethnicity’.

The concept ‘racial discrimination’ or ‘racism’ is applied to both race and ethnicity, as outlined by international law and the definition used by UNESCO (2017). It refers to

any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.

As this definition is applied to both physical and cultural qualities, it can also be applied to tribal discrimination. During colonial times, tribes in Africa – and in this case Botswana – were divided, and the same tribe could be split between different countries. The tribes then had to develop national identities as well as tribal identities. Today, Botswana nationals, accordingly, have to maintain their identities in a constant relation to those of others, and it is evident that, for the learners in this study, this was an issue with which they struggled at school. This struggle to maintain a tribal (and subsequently personal) identity was, according to the data analysis, compromised by the fact that there exists a perceived hierarchy of tribes (see Section

5.3.2.1). So, just as the notion of perceived hierarchy plays a role in racial discrimination, it plays out similarly in tribal discrimination. Discrimination described in the data was based on physical features such as skin colour and looks (see Section 5.3.2.2) as well as cultural and ethnic features, such as traditional names (see Section 5.3.2.3) and the use of language (see Section 5.3.2.4). As part of my research journey (elaborated on in Appendix E), it was important to understand the subtle manifestations of racism that enabled me to recognise internalised racism in the form of tribalism.

As outlined in the theoretical perspective chapter (Chapter 2), colonialism created a rift among ethnic groups by giving privileges and a high position to some tribal groups “in order to keep different groups of the colonised apart, ‘both psychologically and physically’” (Kabeer, 2002:13). Colonialism did not invent ethnic groups or divisions in Africa; precolonial African societies also had multiple tribes or conditions that led to conflict, power struggles and a hierarchy of tribes (Hagg, & Kangwanja, 2007). It was the setting up of separate communities in which representatives of the colonised groups interacted on unequal terms with the colonial representatives that changed matters when colonial rule was established in Africa (Kabeer, 2002). This use of tribal authorities as agents of political violence also manifested in colonial Botswana. Colonial powers mobilised ‘traditional’ hierarchies to maintain their domination, “nominating chiefs and investing them with the backing of the colonial state” (Kabeer, 2002:12). Chiefs from preferred groups had control over their own tribes as well as over the minority tribes that were assimilated under them or within their tribes (Kabeer, 2002). Therefore, Botswana inherited the structures of domination of colonialism that resulted in a mind-set where the dominant voice or culture was conquering and silencing the voice of the other or the minority (Dei, 2012; 2016; Kanu, 2006). Today, this discourse of discrimination rests on power relations and social oppression because in the midst of diversity there is prejudice against those who are different.

This fear of the other (McDonald & Jacobs, 2005) is widespread in Botswana and manifests as a general fear of black foreigners, so that the issues at stake are not linked to racism or racial discrimination, but tribal discrimination and a fear of black foreigners (Morapedi, 2007). This was experienced by the learners as well as by me, the teacher and participant observer (see sections 5.2 and 5.3 on results). Those belonging to tribes in power are constantly trying to

keep the other in positions of mental and political subordination (Kanu, 2006) by applying and justifying themselves with perceptions that are based on stereotypical views of the other.

### **6.2.1 Skin colour and tribal discrimination**

Colour-consciousness has been particularly noticeable in societies where colonialism has been part of the history of the people (Prah, 2002). A result of the inherited system of domination is internalised racism, a concept that manifests when people consciously or unconsciously accept a racial hierarchy. As motivated above, racial discrimination is reflected in tribal discrimination. Shades of skin colour have for instance been used as markers of hierarchy and status in the social order. As I mentioned earlier, the lighter the shade, the closer to white, the higher the social status. The data indeed revealed (see Section 5.3.2.2) that learners made several references to skin colour and lighter or darker shades of black skin as ‘evidence’ from which to derive individual status. Internalised racism has many consequences for learners at school. Their school work may suffer, they may develop poor self-esteem and perceive their own families or communities in a negative light (Cokley, 2002; Kohli, 2008). In the same way, a discriminatory view of ethnic qualities such as the perceived hierarchy of languages resulted in the use of stereotypes (see Section 5.3.2.4).

### **6.2.2 Tribal names and tribal discrimination**

Internalised racism, tribal names and hierarchy of tribes and nations were issues with which learners were confronted on a daily basis. Tribal names that other learners did not understand led to learners being bullied and made fun of by their classmates, inflicting pain often without the perpetrators realising. Name calling that started off as a joke for the perpetrators, became the very avenue for marginalisation, discrimination, and stigmatisation. A person’s identity and who he/she becomes in life is influenced by his/her name and how it is pronounced as he/she grows up (Kohli & Solórzano, 2012). Children begin to understand who they are through their parents’ accent, intonation, and pronunciation of their name. In many cultures, names carry cultural and family significance, such as events that were significant around the time of the baby’s birth. Hence, names can connect children to their ancestors, country of origin or ethnic group, and often have deep meaning or symbolism for parents and families.

Therefore, at school, mispronunciation of one's name or changing it into a negative nickname can have an impact on an individual, especially where learners from minority groups are in a social context embedded with power hierarchies. Some learners are more targeted than others. If a learner has a name that is foreign to the dominant Setswana learners, they could be more prone to discrimination. The very act of renaming or laughing at someone's name is but to redefine one's symbolic world and a claim of power over the one being victimised. Commenting on the importance of names, Bosmajian (1974:3) states: "An individual has no definition, no validity for himself without a name. His name is his badge of individuality, the means whereby he identifies himself and enters a truly subjective existence".

Therefore, misrecognition or misrepresentation of one's name can have an impact on a person's esteem or identity. In such situations, names could result in individuals altering their behaviour to avoid interacting with fellow learners (Carpusor & Loges, 2006). Not only do names mark individuals as unique, but names are also used as core markers in the construction of an individual's personal, ethnic, and national identity. In many situations, names are the first and foremost information available to people during interaction and can convey impressions in subtle ways (Carpusor & Loges, 2006). Madziva (2018:941), referencing Alia (2007), argues that names are not just labels, "but can be an important site to analyse issues of power relations and notions of discrimination". In recent studies and existing literature, the significance of names as markers of identity has gained currency in the context of racial discrimination (Madziva, 2018).

For example, Bertrand and Mullainathan (2004, cited in Carpusor & Loges, 2006:937) found that "résumés containing White-sounding names elicit close to 50% more call backs than equivalent résumés containing African-American-sounding names". Wood, Hales, Purdon, Sejersen and Hayllar (2009) suggest that in the UK labour market, names can disadvantage individuals of particular racial and ethnic backgrounds. They argue that participants (in the study carried out in the UK) with typical African or Asian names were less likely to attend an interview after submitting their CV than those with stereotypically white British names. Drawing from the research in my school, the participants revealed that learners from non-Tswana-speaking tribes whose names were in their ethnic tribal language suffered stereotypical name calling and stigmatisation, as did those whose names were foreign. Such views confirm Rom and Benjamin's (2011:8) argument:

Whenever we hear a name, we unconsciously place the person who owns it in relation to local social hierarchies, assigning him/her a position between the centre and the margins. In this process the name serves as a basis for the evaluation of what is normative and prestigious or else awkward and stigmatized.

Names elicit opinions about the owner that become the primary basis for stereotyping, as noted by the learners:

*I feel like people don't take me serious because they always laugh when I say my name.*

(BF9)

*I always made fun of his name [...] shame. Even the guys from my class do because it sounds funny. What does it mean anyway in Setswana? (C1)*

*My worst experience was when they made fun of my friend who is close to me. It hurt me because everyone always makes fun of his name. (C2)*

The learners revealed that names can be used to construct boundaries of belonging to demarcate who is an insider and who is an outsider. Most of the participants agreed that for some of the learners, names were the reason why they were being discriminated against. In this regard, Finch (2008:709) states that “[m]y name [...] marks me as a unique individual, and it also gives some indication of my location in the various social worlds which I inhabit – it encapsulates my legal persona [...], it reveals my gender and probably my ethnicity”.

### **6.2.3 Language and tribal discrimination**

Since independence, Botswana has been portrayed as ethnically homogenous (Good, 2009). However, there are currently, as mentioned in Chapter 1, 26 languages spoken in Botswana by the 55 indigenous groups, while Setswana is the national language and English the official language. Nyati-Ramahobo (1999) maintains that language planning in Botswana was influenced by the perception that language diversity is problematic, and that minority languages, cultures and identities should be eradicated. The historically engendered sociocultural hierarchy has furthermore informed language positioning and use in both official and unofficial public discourse.

Within this context it is significant to note that language, in any society, represents power. This is clearly articulated by the former president of AZAPO<sup>27</sup>, Mosibudi Mangena (1996, cited in Nodoba, 2002:331): “Language, just like knowledge, is power. If you take away or cripple the language of a people, you take away their power to interact with their situation effectively”.

Hence, a dominant discourse is used to impose culture and worldviews on marginalised groups (Apple, 2008; Maruatona, 2006). As Maruatona (2015) claims: “In Botswana, state power is used negatively when the dominant elite use its language to impose their culture and worldviews on minorities” (Maruatona, 2015:43). By prescribing the language that citizens are to use, the ruling party maintains autocratic power over their minds (Wane, 2008). Therefore, the sociolinguistic marginalisation of minority ethnic groups mirrors their sociocultural and political domination (Mafela, 2009). For example, as Mafela (2009:229) argues: “Basarwa have had to appropriate Setswana, the dominant national language for survival. However, their appropriation of the Setswana language has had deleterious effects on their languages and overall socio- cultural identity”. As explained in Chapter 1, the marginalisation of linguistic groups in Botswana cannot be justified from the perspective of the language of the ‘majority’ (Nyati-Ramahobo, 2002), but is rather integral to the politics of recognition that manifests as minoritisation, as Setswana mother-tongue speakers experience varied levels of social inclusion at the expense of those whose languages are prohibited in schools. There is a need to think of language as more than just a form of communication and to acknowledge that language also embodies identity and a way of knowing; that language can enable assimilation as well as resistance with material consequences for non-dominant language speakers (Dei & Kempf, 2006).

Therefore, when a Setswana-speaking learner demands as follows:

*Ma’am can you tell them to stop speaking in that language ... This is not their home where they can speak Sekalaka. Here we are in school (B29),*

It is not only an issue of such a learner claiming a position of power over the Bakalaka speaker, it is also denying the Bakalaka speaker his/her own identity and culture. In this process, “one

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<sup>27</sup> AZAPO stands for Azanian People’s Organization, a South African political party which recognizes the importance of student movements.



professed ethnicity is exchanged for another” (Herbert, 2002: 321). As revealed by the results of this study, learners are constantly reminded to avoid speaking in their mother tongue in spite of existing research that points to the importance of the mother tongue in children’s development. The participants in this study revealed that minority learners and international learners struggle in politics to claim respect for themselves or use their languages on an equal basis with the majority tribes. Furthermore, some of the marginalised learners tend to hide their home languages by opting to speak English. Those from tribal groups such as BaKalanga, Bakgalagadi or Basarwa, as noted by one of the participants, *“would not be caught dead speaking that language”* (B6). As a result, some of these learners suffer from low self-esteem and prefer not to reveal their identity.

Although learners use their ethnic languages in the safe space created by tribal members, most of them are reluctant to use it in public spaces in school or elsewhere.

Institutionalised perceptions of prestige associated with the use of Setswana and English have fuelled the stereotypical views that devalue the other languages. It is therefore not surprising that the bullying at school included language use (see Section 5.3.2.4). False, stereotypical perceptions often become ingrained in the minds of the speakers of the marginalised languages as well, as noted in my reflections on my experience with my own children (see Section 5.2). My own awareness and ability to gain understanding and a wider perspective of the stereotypical views of language that I unknowingly upheld grew by being the witness of my children’s struggles with their sense of belonging, identity and culture, alongside that of my own. At school and in class I now stand in a privileged position, as I am conversant in Setswana, Shona and English and I can code-switch with learners. In doing so, I hope to raise awareness rather than to fuel stereotypical views, by demonstrating the use of languages alongside each other and not to maintain power or authority via language.

## **6.2.4 Stereotypes based on otherness**

Physical features such as skin colour, associated with tribal (racial) background, as well as cultural features such as language, associated with ethnic background, lead to judgements based on stereotypical views of otherness and in this regard extend the binary thinking processes associated with colonial knowledge production (Dei & Kempf, 2006). Learners (and

teachers) also apply this binary perspective to other biological and cultural features, not directly related to tribal and ethnical background. Examples of this are given in Section 5.3.2.2, where physical features such as a deformed ear and weight were judged and made fun of. Section 5.3.3 outlines stereotypes that are associated with the income of certain groups of people. In Section 5.3.4, discrimination against homosexual relationships is outlined. Although stereotypical views can be used to highlight positive features and not with the purpose of distancing oneself from the specified features, the data revealed that the stereotypical views held by the learners resulted in bullying.

### **6.3 Bullying, discrimination and the 'other'**

As explained in Section 5.3.5, bullying was often used as the method to enable discrimination. Although the data revealed that bullying was common, the intricate peculiarities of the causes of bullying came out more in the individual interviews and were presented differently in different projects. Most learners suffered from relational bullying, which is defined as “a person’s aggressive behaviour that is intended to harass by damaging the victim’s social relations” (Siyahhan, Aricak, & Cayirdag-Acar, 2012:1954). It includes gossiping, rumour spreading and excluding someone from the group (Coyne, Archer & Eslea, 2006). Bullying as forceful authority is also a deliberate act to create a divide between the self and the other (Kanu, 2006) and can maintain the mindset of colonialism where the dominance and superiority of those in power are taken as a given (Mudimbe, 1988). Bullying and the use of stereotypes in effect mean not recognising the human rights of the other. In this regard, Taylor (1994:25) explains that misrecognition is a process of oppression and that “nonrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being.” As stated in Chapter 5, my own experiences of misrecognition due to tribal discrimination were and continue to be deeply disturbing and painful.

### **6.4 The projects that promoted expression through art**

Art is known for its ability to not only represent and produce culture, but also to function beyond words in processes of self-expression, communication and healing (Frostig, 2011).

Furthermore, art as a creative process can inspire (artists themselves as well as the viewer) and facilitate the development of ideas (Frostig, 2011). Visual culture is becoming increasingly prevalent in contemporary societies and if taken into account that art represents an “embodiment and reinforcement of socially shared significances” (Dissanayake, 1988:200), visual art can be explored as a learning platform to facilitate social change through self-expression.

As shown in Section 5.2, the art projects done at school provided several opportunities for learners to express themselves. On the one hand, they received incentives to reflect in written or verbal format on issues in general or specific topics introduced by me. On the other hand, they received the opportunity to express themselves in various media. An example of how a learner expressed herself and her own sense of identity would be Learner B3, who made a guitar from clay to represent herself (see Figure 5.3). At a later stage she explained that a happy and safe space is created when she listens to music. She also explained that her parents are divorced and that she feels as if she belongs to neither of the new sets of parents and that she claims to be an independent Motswana. In this regard the process of making the clay guitar as well as the artwork itself generated awareness of the healing that music can generate as a happy space in spite of her broken-up family. She would come and sit in the art room during her free lunch hour or during study time. While teachers complained about how often she missed their lessons, I complained about how much she was in the art room and although I initially thought she was seeking attention, I realised that the art processes gave her an opportunity to reflect on her own personal issues while physically making an artwork. Eisner (2002:81) argues that the use of materials as a medium for thinking through and dealing with complexity could be valuable. Education, he argues, could learn from the arts and the art-making processes to enrich learning (Eisner, 2002). Although the aim was to teach the techniques of working with clay, the emphasis was not placed on the end product, but on experimenting with what clay can do while we think about personal issues emanating from the discussion; a spontaneous process between the mind and the hand. Gell (1999) argues that art projects come into existence in-between the interactions of ‘person-agents’ and ‘thing-agents’. Sholt and Gavron (2006:66) posit that the process of handling, manipulating and sculpting clay and the products of these activities can be considered as thinking and reflecting processes.

During the same project, Learner B2 made a skull to represent himself (see Figure 5.1), which suggests that he felt as if he, or a part of himself, had died. Learner B4 (Figure 5.4), who created a traditional pot, believed that being a traditionalist and keeping the status quo of Botswana are best. This learner felt comfortable with being classified as a Motswana who speaks Setswana, and he was proud of the traditional pot he had created. His feelings of belonging and contentment were due to the fact that he was not a member of a minority tribe, but a member of a tribe that is high in the hierarchy of tribes and therefore was content with the current status quo.

The sculpture of a learner that is head first in a rubbish bin (see Figure 5.25) sparked emotions and comments among the learners. They highlighted the positions of power that exist among learners and how the more powerful discriminate against minorities. Learners revealed that the school was a 'dangerous' place to be.

Another learner who took part in the clay project, Learner B1, was known among learners and teachers as a bully and he was also eventually, after being expelled on a temporary basis on several occasions, permanently expelled from the school. Although I did not know that when I started teaching at the school, I learned later from comments and reflections made, especially by the girls in the class, that he was disrespectful and thought very little of female teachers:

*He is crazy, Ma'am, this one you don't touch, just look at him because he hates female teachers. (B6)*

He was disliked by teachers and learners. As another learner wrote in a reflection: they wanted him *"gone or expelled because he is a danger to our lives"*. In class he challenged me when I went to his desk to inspect his progress, while he pointed at his work, a clay penis:

*Why are you not laughing or shouting at this? (B1)*

In response, I explained that if I laughed at his self-portrait, the penis artwork, which was a representation of him, it meant that I would be laughing at him. If I shouted, that would imply there was a specific way I was expecting everyone to represent themselves. In response he destroyed the clay penis and started to wedge his clay again, more disappointed than angry. I had taught this Form 2 class for about four weeks before this project. During this time, Learner B1 would often be sleeping, disrupting the class and ignore me when I reprimanded

him. The girls never reported him because they were afraid of him. He would also often walk out of class as if I did not exist. At times when others came to the art room, he walked past the classroom and went to the toilets or jumped the fence, as learners later revealed in their reflections after the project. After the incident with the clay penis he spent the double lesson in class working and not sleeping or harassing those around him. He continuously remade a penis and spent more time working the clay, and often called for my attention. He furthermore attended all my lessons and kept his clay moist to prevent it from drying out, longer than the rest of the learners. I came to conclude that he enjoyed kneading the clay more than making a final product and could see that working with clay had become a way for him to express his emotions and that I had possibly opened a channel of communication. He did make his penis portrait eventually, but it broke before I could photograph it.

For the lessons that followed the clay topic, Learner B1 would speak to me, and although he had not become a perfect pupil and often lapsed into negative behaviour, he made an effort to listen and behave and responded positively. I realised that, like the clay, which is worked in stages, Learner B1 needed the space to work on his issues or experiences. He was a bully in school and whenever he was caught harassing learners, he always came to report himself to me. He played truant frequently from other lessons, and in some cases he would skip other lessons to come to the art room. The art room became a hide-out for him. However, despite providing this safe space, he was suspended for 20 days for allegedly sexually assaulting a Form 1 learner in the bathroom. When he came back, most of the learners were afraid of him. They had given him the nickname 'Juvi', from 'juvenile', which became synonymous with his actions. He continued to look me up when he was in trouble and to engage with me in his own way. Unfortunately, he did not finish his year, as he was taken out for counselling and there was a mutual agreement between the school and his parents to take him to another school. Subsequently, I lost contact with him. This was saddening, as it seemed as if art was indeed, as shown by existing research (Frostig, 2011), providing the opportunity for Learner B1 to communicate, to heal and to facilitate change, but time had run out.

During the second project, the collage project, the artworks produced by the learners demonstrated their feelings associated with being stereotyped and subsequently marginalised. The collages (see figures 5.5–5.7) were a visual expression of how learners experienced their current spaces of learning as opposed to that of primary school. During the

initial stages of collecting materials for the artworks, issues of social class came to the fore as learners cut out pictures of labels such as Nike, Adidas and flashy cars (learners later used some of the images as covers for their portfolios in which they keep their work). Because the emerging issues included a variety of topics, during this period learners felt ‘unconfutable’ in school. They were not ready to open up during the class discussions as they were afraid of becoming targets. It was their first time in high school, so mostly it was an overwhelming experience. The various stages of this project facilitated both formal (with incentives) and informal (spontaneous) opportunities to discuss social issues at school. As the learners had to work in pairs to collect images from magazines, for example, they had the informal opportunity to communicate about their intentions with the project and to learn the value of sorting out misunderstandings. After a formal reflection on social issues led by me, they could further discuss their individual experiences with each other as they continued to share material such as scissors, glue and pencils. During the process of making the collages, I encouraged conversations about the issues they were trying to depict by asking open-ended questions. It was interesting to note that cut-out images of brand name labels for shoes and clothes (portrayed as high-status brands by popular media) were popular among many learners. They seemed to feel that they gained status by relating to these labels. This tendency, to some extent, mirrors the mentioned behaviour that values the ingrained but stereotypical ideas about skin colour, for instance, that is attached to membership of a tribe high in the hierarchy.

The cactus in Figure 5.7 became something concrete and tactile and unconsciously elicited emotions of pain and feelings of discomfort, revealing the psychological state of the learners in relation to their physical space and emotional space while in school. Image fragments that learners chose to use in the collages were placed to give a ‘sense’ of something, rather than a literal expression of an idea and, as a result, the process “honours the unconnected and inexplicable” and allows for “re-seeing, relocating, and connecting anew” (Mullen, 1999, cited in Butler-Kisber, 2008:268), a process which, as Williams (2000:275) posits, reduces “conscious control over what is being presented which contributes to greater levels of expression, and in turn greater areas for examination and subsequent clarification”. The constant reference to colours, especially black, revealed how unconsciously the colour is ingrained in negative connotations of inferior and bad. However, most learners participating

in the class discussion realised that besides the issue of making others feel belittled because of not being wealthy, there were other issues that affected those who felt marginalised. During the discussions of the final artworks, issues of bullying, stealing and low self-esteem surfaced.

Learner B46's collage, Figure 5.5, represented the dark space she negotiates everyday due to differences in the way gender is performed within and outside school. As before, discussing the work by Learner B46 gave the learners an opportunity to critically think about their own experiences and those around them. They were able to identify instances in which they had 'othered' or labelled learners as gay and how that might have impacted such learners, trying to get an understanding of how the artist (Learner B46), not in such absolute terms, experienced her social space in school. This conversation mirrored the views of the wider public where laws regarding same-sex relationships are still contested through all levels of society (Kebinakgabo, 2019:2; Keetshabe, 2019). In this regard, the artworks moved beyond their own expressions to open wider dialogue on and awareness about stereotypes attached to gender and the confining impact of the judgements based on stereotypes.

As Learner B46 wrote in the reflection, her collage reveals that she feels like she is hiding behind the curtain the entire time. As such, it was interesting that she was willing to write and reflect about her "unknown gender", as she calls it. As discussed in Section 5.3.4, Learner B46 came up with all types of reasons for wearing school trousers rather than the recommended skirt. She explained that she had been referred to the guidance and counselling department for abusing other learners (girls) emotionally and bullying other girls. Although officially she is not and will not be identified as gay, among her friends she insists on remaining 'genderless' or referred to as 'he' rather than 'she'. These collages were discussed in more detail in Section 5.3.4

During Project 3: Embroidery and appliqué (see Section 5.2.3), the learners had to present portraits of themselves again. During this project, most veered towards how they saw themselves in response to the issues discussed during earlier projects. Most learners' portraits were an appliqué of the animal that represents the characteristics they had or wished they had.

As the project progressed, it became clear that skin colour was a significant issue with which many learners were confronted on a daily basis. Learner B49 (Figure 5.14) and Learner A1 (Figure 5.15) both chose to create a lion, but their choice of thread and colour triggered an interesting discussion later. Learner B49 used fine, red embroidery thread which, according to him, signified his power and precision:

*I'm a lion with very sharp teeth. I will bite anything that threatens me along the way.*

(B49)

Learner A1's lion was made with wool and looked fluffy and cuddly. He saw himself as a cuddly cub, but dangerous when angered. He confessed, however, that although he represented himself as a lion, he was afraid of the bullies at school. As an international learner from the Philippines, he felt he stood out too much because he did not come from any of the Botswana tribes. Learner B51 (Figure 5.16) made a kudu, a deer which is a totem of his tribe, and to him this was a symbol of pride. His choice of material, a German print locally known as *letaise*, signified his stature as a proud Motswana, and traditional at heart. *Letaise* is worn during most traditional events and is now part of the traditional wear. Another example from this project is Learner C1, who decided not to use appliqué and stitches, but opted to crochet. She also referred to her skin colour and looks like a coloured person (also see Section 6.2.1). Although she is light in complexion, as a coloured person, learners called her by a derogatory name. As explained earlier, her complexion made her a target of bullying. As a coloured girl, she views herself as a colourful owl, but not the typical black and white owl. She felt that the owl depicted her awkwardness and the uncomfortable space that she inhabits due to the discrimination she suffers. An owl, she commented in an interview,

*... is a very shy animal, which you don't see always except at night. People are afraid of it because I think some tribes associate it with bad luck. I am not bad luck but I feel very bad when people call me some of these ugly names. (C1)*

She explained that the owl, made from a milk bottle and covered by crocheted wool, can open up and close, in the same way that she only opens up to some people and not others. Learner C1 mentioned her feelings of unease at school and said that she would rather “*keep it in and not talk about it*”. The owl, because of “*its mysterious status in the African tradition*”, represents to her the way other learners see her. In this regard, her owl embodied both the



undefined and open-ended nature of not belonging to a specific tribe as well as the stereotypes associated with being coloured.

Kuthy and Broadwater (2014:30) posit that our life stories “play a major role in decision making and are important for individual and group identity construction” and accordingly I encouraged the learners to tell their own stories as they worked on their projects. Their experiences in their learning spaces are packages with situated knowledge, often focusing on problems and difficult situations in which they find themselves. They soon realised that there were commonalities in the issues they deal with at various times at school. Issues of tribalism surfaced again alongside language, skin colour, intellectual ability and sexual orientation. The space that enabled the learners to talk was intended not only to let them learn *from* talking, but also to learn *to* talk (see Lave & Wenger, 1991).

The last project was a free project, although many made masks (see Section 5.2.5,) and the learners again drew inspiration from animals and their masks were inspired by tribal totems or animals. According to local tribes, totem animals have spiritual significance and these animals often have emblem status. In our discussion and presentation, the totem animals also functioned as a way to protect learners, to establish their territory and to underline their existence. What surprised the learners during the discussion was that although they themselves came from diverse tribes and nations, they had similar totems. The totems were not unique to specific areas in Botswana, but could be found in Zimbabwe, South Africa and Zambia. Therefore, they managed to make connections with those with whom they would otherwise have not connected. Eisner (1994:191) points out that “one of the aims of art education is to enable all our students to gain meaningful access to what the peoples of all cultures have created”. This could be done through including images and artefacts that represent different cultures and beliefs being displayed in classrooms (Adejumo, 2002).

## **6.5 The ways in which art can create a safe space**

Learner B65, in her reflection and in one of the semi-structured interviews, explained that her sculpture depicted a suicidal girl (see Figure 5.26) who was tired of being picked upon and bullied by other learners. Other learners bullied her because she was intelligent, and they felt

she was a teacher's favourite. I referred her to the guidance and counselling teacher for assistance. If it was not for the opportunity created in the art class through the combined incentives to make a sculpture that reflects the self as well as to discuss and reflect upon issues such as bullying and being victimised, this learner might only have received counselling at a much later stage, if at all.

However, art not only opens up a safe space for the victim and the one being bullied, but for the bully as well, as demonstrated in the previous section with the discussion of Learner B1. In this regard it seems as if my non-judgemental role as the teacher and facilitator was part of the process of creating a safe space via art. From this point of view, the art class as a safe space manifests when learners firstly have the opportunity to reveal themselves and their own thoughts and feelings beyond words through the creation of art (Frostig, 2011), and secondly when combined with the opportunity and encouragement via incentives to reflect in (written) words about themselves and the wider community. However, it also requires of the teacher to be open to new (self-) awareness and to be willing to hold and acknowledge the often-opposing experiences of the learners in a non-judgemental way. This holding space can then be a step towards new awareness that can lead to a change of perceptions, healing and better understanding of the underlying qualities that individuals share so that the superficial differences are not blown out of proportion (Dissanayake, 1988; Frostig, 2011).

## **6.6 Multicultural education and critical citizenship in the art classroom**

The art room as safe space then includes not only the physical space and the art processes, but also all learners, the victims and bullies, as well as the art teacher. Art as a safe space refers then to the facilitation of engagement with art and with the other to express what has been unsaid or hidden. Education during the colonial era supported a binary view of the coloniser and colonised, the culture of the coloniser was held as superior and knowledge was fixed (London, 2006). Instead of this fixed knowledge, the focus of education should be more on processes and especially the process of becoming. This process often begins by focusing on how social groups were represented and how this in turn influenced self-representation (Hall 1996). hooks (1995) explains that in order to decolonise the mind, it is important to

explore representation as a concept in order to understand the personal struggles that occur under a colonial mindset. According to hooks (1995) and Leavy (2009), art can be used as a platform to expose cultural hierarchies, but also to move beyond these. The third project that made use of embroidery and appliqué is an example of how this process of representation can play out when the focus is on (self-) representation.

As explained and illustrated in the previous section, by representing themselves, the learners revealed the dynamic relationship between the stereotypical views others had of them and their own understanding of self, based for instance on skin colour and the hierarchy of tribes. However, apart from the individual learner's focus on self-representation, this project also had a social focus on collaboration. Before the appliqué and embroidery project, learners taught each other different stitches that could be used in their project. This was done in order to encourage effort through increased participation to develop "a sense of identity as an expert practitioner" (Kuthy & Broadwater, 2014:28). Lave and Wenger (1991) propose a social theory of learning that emphasises the way learners grow towards full participation in a dynamic community of practice rather than learning based on the educator's standpoint. Therefore, the learners took the lead in choosing materials, sharing and teaching each other the embroidery stitches.

As was the case with the final project where most learners made masks to resemble themselves as animals, the artworks and discussions inspired by the artworks helped them to move beyond geographical borders of tribe and nation, but also to open up the borders created by stereotypes, as some of the learners realised that their totems were similar to those of their classmates. Learners were able to bring materials unique to their tradition, tribe or nation to use in the process of art making. The artworks produced gave a small but significant display of different beliefs and values of learners from diverse backgrounds and nations. The activities therefore carved out a space for self-redefinition and self-understanding as they explored their personal experiences of privilege and oppression in a multicultural setup. Multicultural education highlights the importance of learners' understanding of the cultural worldviews of themselves and others (Sue & Sue, 2008).

However, the social justice aspect explored in this study demanded that learners move beyond a multicultural understanding of diverse cultural worldviews and become social change agents by taking action in terms of issues of equity and justice. For the purpose of this

study, social justice was considered from the angle as put forward by Fraser and Honneth (2003), in which recognition and redistribution are used as a way to challenge inequalities within schools. The results from this study showed that recognition via more honest representation of self that moved beyond the remnants of a fixed colonial mindset had indeed shifted for many of the learners on an individual level as well as in groups. However, the learners' ability to take action on behalf of others and to openly challenge inequalities seems yet to develop.

In this regard and in order to move towards multicultural group dynamics (see Figure 3.2), this study endeavoured on an informal basis to create the essential components of social justice education (see Section 3.4.2). These components are, according to Hackman (2005), that learners master content, that they have access to the tools that enable a critical analysis of the social issues associated with oppression and discrimination, that they receive tools and opportunity to reflect on their own perspectives and finally that they receive the tools and opportunity to get actively involved with social change. This often occurs within an atmosphere of collaboration and within a dynamic group setting (Hackman, 2005). As shown in Chapter 5, the learners did indeed master various skills to perform art, as prescribed by the curriculum. The specific topics that were introduced for artwork encouraged and facilitated a critical analysis of social issues such as various forms of discrimination. The incentive to reflect verbally and in writing allowed them several opportunities to reflect on these issues. This was also often done in the context of group work and group discussions.

Social justice education is a stepping stone towards multicultural education. Multicultural education (see Section 3.5.3) consists of five dimensions (Banks, 1993; Banks & McGee Banks, 2004; Banks, 2016). The approach taken to art in the lessons described in this research followed in the footsteps of Banks's proposed model. Firstly, content integration was promoted by encouraging learners to express their own unique stories and experiences and furthermore to include these in their artworks. The knowledge construction process, secondly, followed up this process of content integration, as learners were encouraged and supported in a process to understand and investigate assumptions and biases, for instance when gender orientation was discussed. Thirdly, an equity pedagogy was followed by acknowledging the value and validity of various (home) languages and dialects used by learners as well as by acknowledging different sexual orientations. Fourthly, prejudice

reduction took place when learners' tendency to discriminate was deliberately counteracted by providing a variety of opportunities for marginalised learners to express their feelings and experiences and to get additional support for these learners. Fifthly, although an empowering school culture and social structure do not yet fully exist, learners had the opportunity to point at instances where teachers took part in discrimination and bullying processes. This was an attempt to engage with Grant and Sleeters' (1993) proposed components of the multicultural art curriculum, (see Section 3.5.5) where the first component stipulates that democracy should be practised by the school in its full capacity.

I hope that my willingness to face my own humiliation and pain due to marginalisation (see Appendix E), to try to understand the rigid and faulty reasoning behind this process and to put society's stereotypes aside when I engage with others will make me sensitive and strong when I try to create the opportunity for marginalised learners to do the same. Furthermore, I hope that this awareness can be called upon to improve teaching practice that can redress disparities in the current educational system. The school authority fails to acknowledge (as became clear in this research) that some learners are victimised because of their cultural and tribal heritage. Despite the cases that are reported to the school authorities by affected learners, the institution fails to accept the existence of diverse identities and modes of association the marginalised use in an effort to combat marginalisation. We therefore fail to equip learners with the skills necessary to ask critical questions about the role of power and privilege in established systems and structures. Learning opportunities can be afforded through participation in dialogue and meaning negotiation to highlight common themes of concern from the diverse groups and to move towards social justice education and multicultural education that will run deep to erase the borders that marginalise learners.

## Chapter 7: Concluding remarks and implications

### 7.1 Introduction

This research topic was chosen because of my own experiences within my teaching and learning environment. I became aware of the discriminatory and humiliating circumstances that some of my learners experience and also became aware that my strong reaction to this stems from my own experiences of being humiliated in front of other teachers. This research sought to discover to what extent discrimination takes place in the classroom and how art can contribute to opening up a safe space to explore the experiences within the teaching and learning environment. The study explored visual arts as a tool for learners to negotiate social and cultural meanings and inform understanding of self. The investigation was carried out in reference to the research question: To what extent can art processes facilitate safe spaces to openly engage in dialogue about stereotypes and discrimination?

A case study research design was used through a process of various methods of data collection such as written reflections, artworks and semi-structured interviews with learners from multicultural backgrounds at the school. Furthermore, a qualitative methodology was deemed appropriate as I attempted to understand, rather than measure or explain, the learners' experiences in their learning spaces. It was appropriate in the sense that qualitative research is "concerned with the process rather than the outcomes or the product" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998:6).

This case study was performed at a junior community secondary school in Botswana's South East Region. It included 75 participants who are art learners at the school at which I teach and the research was fused with the teaching and learning syllabus.

### 7.2 Conclusions drawn from the findings and implications

Factual and interpretive conclusions followed by conceptual conclusions are discussed in the sections that follow.

## **7.2.1 Factual and interpretive conclusions and implications**

### **7.2.1.1 Conclusions related to stereotyping and discrimination**

Before colonialism, friction and hierarchies between tribes existed and were documented (Wilmsen, 2002). When the colonisers came, the existing systems were disrupted and different hierarchies were created. This had an influence and impact on how the locals perceived their own systems and themselves. The colonisers of Botswana left in 1966 and Botswana gained independence. When this happened, racial discrimination did not disappear in Botswana; it still exists in different forms, such as internalised racism between tribes, as discussed in this thesis. The newly constructed and imposed borders and categories to organise the land and its people had an effect on how government structures were organised. Currently, certain minority tribes do not have the same status as others. Minority groups all over the world struggle to fight against unfair discrimination. It is the choices of current governments to keep colonial-influenced hierarchies in place for their own gain. This research highlights the ingrained mindsets left behind by the colonial period, but also the problems of current non-action to change the discriminatory hierarchical structures that could change the school systems and enable more equal opportunities for learners in schools.

As Fanon (1968) indeed emphasises, the colonisers left behind their mindset that was already institutionalised and ingrained in the minds of the locals. This mindset relies on constructed and unfair categories which has aggravated discrimination between people (Dei, 2006). Children are born into this perpetuating system, but this research is a call to action to break this ingrained discriminatory way of being to enable a better future for the people in Botswana.

The main challenge at the school (and at most schools in Botswana) is that although the authorities claim the school to be multicultural-compliant, learners are still being discriminated against due to their tribal or national backgrounds. This discrimination exists between learners, between teachers, as well as between learners and teachers. The denial of

these power hierarchies exists within the social spaces, as learners and staff alike readily use stereotypes to navigate their social world, without realising that doing so has negative social implications for the marginalised 'other'. Therefore, the issue at hand was to explore the use of stereotypes in order to understand the power of dominant forms of representation that make learners from the marginalised and discriminated-against tribes see themselves as different.

The use of stereotyping to discriminate between different tribes and nationalities in the classroom emerged as the biggest stumbling block in the way of multicultural education. Instead of tolerance for diversity and differences, there is intolerance for the tribal culture of the other, which includes physical aspects such as skin colour as well as cultural aspects such as use of language and traditional names. This intolerance for difference is also applied beyond tribal considerations to, for example, income, physical appearance and sexual orientation. In this regard, the true identities of those being bullied are misrecognised. The otherness that is thereby created becomes the focal point of bullying between learners as well as members of staff. This mirrored to a certain extent the mindset of colonialism and the power relationship between the coloniser and the colonised.

This study also contributes to the conversations on anti-colonialism and postcolonialism. Anti-colonialism involves a perspective that seeks to subvert the dominant relations of knowledge production that sustain hierarchies and systems of power (Dei, 2006:5). Although Botswana as a country is proud to claim herself a tolerant and just nation, we still have a long way to go in our education circles to clearly understand the deeper meaning of multiculturalism, tolerance and justice in our schools. It is crucial that the voices of learners are interpreted and understood (as done in this research) as situated in and thereby influenced by political, ideological, institutional and structural contexts (see Kelchtermans, 2010). The purpose should be to give each learner a sense of involvement and learning to think of diversity as a strength and that not only one way of being is the norm, thereby guiding learners to know themselves and their worlds.



As mentioned in Chapter 1, schools partly recreate the social and economic hierarchies of a larger society through what is seemingly a neutral process of selection and instruction (Apple, 1979). Stereotypes, as also discussed by the learners, are conveyed through parents, teachers, peers and the media (Whitley & Kite, 2006). In order to move towards multicultural group dynamics (see Figure 3.2), this study endeavoured on an informal basis to create the essential components of social justice education, as proposed by Hackman and described in chapters 3 and 6 (Hackman, 2005:104). Learners managed to present their grievances and issues that the school considered as non-existent. The accounts of stereotyping and prejudice informed most of the learners' imagery as well as the discussions that ensued as a result. In addition, they managed to gain perspective on how the minority learners tend to be 'left out', as the dispositions of the majority tend to saturate the fabric of daily social and cultural life. Inter-ethnic dialogue brought the learners' perspectives from different cultures together, hopefully breaking down barriers of isolation and stereotypes and encouraging new forms of engagement.

#### 7.2.1.2 Conclusions related to the value of art education

This research process was performed by interventions in the art classroom via the making of art and within a multicultural education and education for social justice context.

Existing research points to the fact that art process can be a form of inquiry in the same way as reading is a form of inquiry. We rely on words to express meaning, but the arts could be used as an alternative for working through sensitive issues and reaching alternative conclusions. In this regard, the arts can open up multiple possible outcomes that enable learners to see social issues from various perspectives. Art can "alter the way in which one experiences the world, and knowledge production emerges in the connection between oeuvre and daily life" (Sutherland & Acord, 2007:129). Artworks develop what Jones (2006), terms "new ways of sensing" (cited in Sutherland & Acord, 2007:129).

In a multicultural setting, art could make available a platform for learners where “an integrated society, based on tolerance and respect for diversity and based on the human rights of all people, is developed” (Dreyer & Singh, 2016:247). Sleeter and Grant (1987:422) describe multicultural education as a “cultural democracy” that “promotes cultural pluralism and social equity by reforming the school program”. Multicultural education refers to educational strategies that aim to assist teachers to acknowledge the experiences of marginalised groups related to issues of race, tribe, class or gender. However, as discussed, teachers often take part in the discrimination of learners and therefore teachers need to be equipped during training with the power to reflect upon the attitudes they bring to class. Accordingly, there is a need for a social justice module in teacher training programmes (see Section 7.2.2 below).

In the art classroom, the processes of making art and elicited conversations became a possible way to challenge the notion of ‘truth’ or ‘what everybody knows’ and to make learners aware of the arbitrary and unfair nature of stereotypes. The visual materials produced by the learners served as open-ended prompts, engaging them in discussions about social issues. Significantly so, it was also the processes of making these materials that not only facilitated opportunities to reflect on issues prompted directly or indirectly by the theme of each art project, but also provided practical opportunities for collaboration that often fused the borders between ‘us’ and ‘them’. From this point of view, the art classroom became the holding space where the ‘us’ and ‘them’ poles, or other forms of binary thinking, could dissolve into a deeper understanding and acceptance of difference and otherness. This meant that the art classroom had to provide space for both the bullied and the bully.

This holding space was firstly established when I, as the teacher, was non-judgemental even about challenging comments made by the learners. This did not mean that I was accepting harmful behaviour and attitudes, as these were redirected for counselling. Secondly, it was important to provide art projects (as discussed in chapters 5 and 6) that provided opportunities for learners to reveal issues beyond words. Thirdly, it was necessary to provide incentives for conversations related to the artworks on topics such as bullying and

stereotyping and often more informal discussions, not triggered by incentives, followed as learners realised that they were in a safe, non-judgemental space. Finally, it was also necessary for the art projects to follow up on previous topics. This extended the opportunity for learners to explore similar issues, or the same issue, but in a more extensive way.

The study revealed that visual art learning acknowledges personal meaning and presents learners with interest that is without fear of ridicule or judgement. Therefore, art has the potential to open up spaces and create learning experiences that could empower learners to engage critically with issues of discrimination and stereotypes that surround and limit their lives. Art in this instance is not only about objects that give pleasure, but also about a form that develops thinking skills, enlarges understanding and establishes a classroom environment that models good citizenship skills, such as respectful listening and tolerance of differing opinions. I acknowledge that the study was undertaken in a specific context and that its aim was not to generalise; however, art as a language of communication can imagine new possibilities that could enlarge learners' scope of freedom and help them work towards new forms of civic engagement.

### 7.2.2 Conceptual conclusions and implications

As a democracy, Botswana faces an ambitious task of creating a curriculum that is responsive to multiculturalism and diversity to align with the country's vision that encourages and accepts the diversity of cultures as well as linguistic variation, especially in our primary and secondary schools. I suggest that multicultural education and social justice education should be a significant aspect of teacher training. Furthermore, a guide in book form should be developed for teachers. The book should assist teachers as they teach in their subject areas with keywords translated into most, if not all indigenous languages found in Botswana. Clear guidelines and examples should be provided to explain how to include social justice education in specific subjects. There is a need for educators to strive towards creating a conducive learning environment in which learners learn to listen and critically reflect on differences and to develop creative and diverse learning activities aimed at inter-ethnic and cross-cultural dialogue and learning. The anti-stereotype approach means that racial, tribal, gender and

social class concepts will be used in a way that the stigma regarding these terms will be reduced.

This study suggests that the challenge for the educational system in Botswana is to become more aware of the prominence of tribal discrimination, internalised discrimination and the perpetuated social structures of colonialism and its effect on learning. As Prah (1998) argues, there is a need to move beyond the inherited and internalised perceptions and to work against all forms of discrimination: racial, tribal, gender and social class.

### **7.3 Further research and critique of the research**

Further research at other schools in Botswana and Africa regarding internalised stereotyping and tribal discrimination is recommended to understand these issues on a deeper level. This research, I believe, only started to uncover the diverse underlying issues involved in tribal discrimination. Cultural beliefs, such as offending ancestors and what is considered sacred, play a major role in prohibiting deeper research into tribal discrimination.

Sexual orientation and gender relations are very sensitive issues in Botswana and some other countries, but specifically in Africa. Cultural beliefs regarding sexual orientation and gender that do not necessarily stem from the colonial period still exist in Botswana and even though the law on homosexual relationships was changed on the 11<sup>th</sup> of June 2019 there is a strong appeal to change it back (Kebinakgabo, 2019:2; Keetshabe, 2019 ). This research only touched on sexual orientation and gender issues that played out in the school environment, but further research needs to be done to understand possible relations between tribalism, sexual orientation and gender in schools and the corresponding effect on equal opportunities.

### **7.4 Concluding remarks**

Taking in consideration the xenophobic and Afrophobic attacks in South Africa in 2019 and the reactions of other countries in Africa towards these discriminatory stereotypical and

socially constructed perceptions of foreigners, this research is very timely. The research highlights how these xenophobic and Afrophobic practices could play out in a school environment and how detrimental that could be for learning environments.

This study contributes to the knowledge gap of research done in southern Africa, and specifically Botswana, regarding tribal discrimination (as opposed to the more known and well-researched concept of racial discrimination) and the role internalised stereotypical views play in tribal discrimination. Apart from tribal discrimination, internalised stereotypes were observed to be applied to other characteristics, such as sexual orientation and social income. The contribution of this research speaks to serious self-reflection that needs to take place to work against the influences of colonialism, but also puts forth the need for deeper insight into tribalism and the interrelationship between colonial and tribal discriminatory practices. This is exactly the aims of decolonisation: to work against the negative influences of colonialism, reflecting on contributing issues such as tribalism and finding a way out of this cycle. This could require time, but existing research has shown that stereotypes are social constructions and can indeed change over time with adequate guidance on alternative perspectives (Bordalo et al., 2014). Art practice in schools is an ideal way to explore alternative perspectives for new possibilities to emerge.

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## Appendix A: Interview guide

### INTERVIEW GUIDE

#### INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESEARCH

**NAME AND CONTACT NUMBER OF RESEARCHER** Donlisha Moahi

Stellenbosch University, Tel: +267 71203062 Email: [mdonlisha@gmail.com](mailto:mdonlisha@gmail.com)

**TITLE OF RESEARCH** Crafting anti-stereotypes: Creating space for critical engagement through art

#### Semi-structured interview schedule:

Interview to be conducted before commencing with the story collection and book creation workshop

<b>SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE:</b>	
<b>Person(s) interviewed</b>	
<b>Date</b>	
<b>Place</b>	
<b>Duration</b>	
<b>PURPOSE OF RESEARCH</b>	
To explore visual arts in a school in Botswana's South East Region as a tool for learners to negotiate social and cultural meanings and inform understandings of self	
<b>PURPOSE OF THIS INTERVIEW</b>	
Obtain perceptions of individual as to what extent art processes can facilitate safe spaces to openly engage in dialogue about stereotypes, labelling and stigmas in a case study at a community junior secondary school in Botswana's South East Region	
<b>ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY</b>	
All the participants in the research will be fully briefed and their participation will be voluntary. I will not use the names of the participants in order to keep their identities confidential.  The information from the participants will be kept confidential and any personal information will not be shared with other participants.	
<b>INTERVIEW CONTENT</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain objective of the focus group and what topics will be addressed</li> <li>• Explanation the potential value of the research as to how the information will be used for the benefit of the specific organisation and communities</li> <li>• Give an indication of the expected length of the interview</li> <li>• Set ground rules or guidelines</li> </ul>	

#### Closing

- Summarise the main issues discussed
- Discuss the next course of action
- Encourage participants to reflect on what they have said and to contact the researcher if they want to edit any of their comments made during the interviews
- Thank the participant for his or her time

## Appendix B: Observation guide

### OBSERVATION GUIDE WHILE WORKING ON PROJECTS

#### INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESEARCH

**NAME AND CONTACT NUMBER OF RESEARCHER** Donlisha Moahi

Stellenbosch University, Tel: +267 71203062, Email: [mdonlisha@gmail.com](mailto:mdonlisha@gmail.com)

**TITLE OF RESEARCH:** Crafting anti-stereotypes: Creating space for critical engagement through art

#### Semi-structured interview schedule:

Interview to be conducted before commencing with the story collection and book creation workshop

Observation guide	
<b>Class observed</b>	
<b>Date</b>	
<b>Place</b>	
<b>Duration</b>	
<b>PURPOSE OF RESEARCH</b>	
To explore visual arts in a school in Botswana's South East Region as a tool for learners to negotiate social and cultural meanings and inform understandings of self	
<b>PURPOSE OF THIS OBSERVATION</b>	
Obtain perceptions of individual as to what extent art processes can facilitate safe spaces to openly engage in dialogue about stereotypes, labelling and stigmas in a case study at a community junior secondary school in Botswana's South East Region	
<b>ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY</b>	
All the participants in the research will be fully briefed and their participation will be voluntary. I will not use the names of the participants in order to keep their identities confidential.  The information from the participants will be kept confidential and any personal information will not be shared with other participants.	
<b>OBSERVATION CONTENT</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the goal of this observation?</li> <li>• Where is it taking place?</li> <li>• Who will be recorded?</li> <li>• What behaviour or interactions will be recorded?</li> <li>• When will it be recorded?</li> <li>• During which event?</li> </ul>	

- Duration of observation?
- How frequently will it be recorded?
- Continuous or intermittent recording?
- What is the emotion/feeling while recording?
- Further comments/observations

## Appendix C: Consent form (learners)



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### CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

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Consent form for Moselewapula Junior Secondary School learners

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Donlisha Moahi for a PhD in Visual Arts at Stellenbosch University.

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**Title of study:** Crafting anti-stereotypes: Creating space for critical engagement through art

#### 1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

To explore visual arts in a school in Botswana's South East Region as a tool for learners to negotiate social and cultural meanings and inform understandings of self.

---

#### 2. PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:

1. Participate in art-based projects about your experience of the Community Interaction project

- Five hands-on craft projects will be carried out during the research period: one mosaic/collage/montage project, one pottery project, one appliqué project, mask making and sculpture.

2. Project discussions will take between 10 and 30 minutes.

- Three group discussions will take place, one in the middle of each project.

3. Interviews will take place at the Moselewapula Junior Secondary School.

- These will be semi-structured interviews that will take place at the outset of the research project.
- Another interview will take place at the end of the research project.

4. Written reflections

- Reflections will be written at the beginning of the research study, during the project making and one at the end of the project making

### **3. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

I do not foresee any concrete risks to participants.

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### **4. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY**

Participants will not benefit from the participation.

The research might help learners to use art as another means of communication.

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### **5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION**

Participants will not receive payment for participating.

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### **6. CONFIDENTIALITY**

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that could be identified with you as participant will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of keeping all written notes safe in a locked drawer in my house. I am the only person who has access to the keys for the drawer. Any participant may request to look at the notes or listen to the voice recordings of their individual contributions at any stage. Participants may review or edit any information mentioned in interviews or observation sessions.

Results will be reported in the PhD study, but any learner may decide to edit or review their comments at any time before they are published. A summary of the results will be given to the relevant Ministry of Education and Skills Development Department in Botswana. If you are interested, you will be told about the findings of the research. The date of publishing will be made available to all participants and a suitable timeframe will be allowed for responses. Information will be erased when the PhD study is published.

The learners will be briefed and their participation is voluntary. All learners will be informed of the action and will be free to withdraw without any consequences regarding their relationships with the Moselewapula Community Junior Secondary School Arts Department.

To protect the identities of participants, I will not reveal any names. The information provided by learners will be kept confidential. If an interpreter is used, he/she will be asked to sign a confidentiality

agreement. He/she will also be given instructions to always fully interpret what you have said, and not to leave out any information.

---

## 7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You may choose whether to participate in this study or not. If you volunteer to be a part of this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain part of the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

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## 8. IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact the researcher, Donlisha Moahi, at [mdonlisha@gmail.com](mailto:mdonlisha@gmail.com) or cell: +267 71203062 or at work +267 3922188, Moselewapula Junior Secondary School, Gaborone; or the supervisor, Prof. Elmarie Costandius at [elmarie@sun.ac.za](mailto:elmarie@sun.ac.za), or call at +27 82 510 9790 or at work +27 21 808 3053, Department of Visual Arts office 2023, Victoria Street, Stellenbosch.

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## 9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [[mfouche@sun.ac.za](mailto:mfouche@sun.ac.za); 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

<b>SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT OR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE</b>
--------------------------------------------------------------

The information above was described to me \_\_\_\_\_ by Donlisha Moahi in English/Setswana and I am in command of this language or it was satisfactorily interpreted to me. I was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to my satisfaction.

I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this study/I hereby consent that the subject/participant may participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form

---

Name of participant



\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of parent / legal representative (if applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of participant / parent or legal representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR**

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to \_\_\_\_\_ [name of the subject/participant] and/or [his/her] representative \_\_\_\_\_ [name of the representative]. [He/she] was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in English/Setswana and no interpreter was used.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of investigator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Appendix D: Participant information leaflet and assent form



### PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LEAFLET AND ASSENT FORM



**TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT:** Crafting anti-stereotypes: Creating space for critical engagement through art

**RESEARCHER'S NAME(S):** Donlisha Moahi

**ADDRESS:** Moselewapula Junior Secondary School, Private Bag 00448, Gaborone

**CONTACT NUMBER:** +267 71203062 or + 267 3922188

#### WHAT IS RESEARCH?

Research is something we do to find **NEW KNOWLEDGE** about the way things (and people) work. We use research projects or studies to help us find out more about children and teenagers and the things that affect their lives, their schools, their families and their health. We do this to try to make the world a better place!

#### WHAT IS THIS RESEARCH PROJECT ALL ABOUT?

It is about exploring visual art as a learning platform to stimulate the creative imagination and let the learners in their expressions describe themselves and their experiences.

### **WHY HAVE I BEEN INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT?**

You are an Art student at a school at which I am going to carry out this research to help with finding new information about how we can use art in finding spaces in which as a learner you can discuss without fear of being bullied.

### **WHO IS DOING THE RESEARCH?**

I am Donlisha Moahi, an Art teacher at Moselewapula Junior Secondary School. I am currently studying towards a doctoral degree at Stellenbosch University.

### **WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO ME IN THIS STUDY?**

You will come to the class a few times where I will ask you some questions about your daily experiences in school. These questions are not a test; I just want to find out what you think. I will also ask you to make some projects about topics we would have discussed and these can be done in any media. We will then discuss the works and write about the work.

### **CAN ANYTHING BAD HAPPEN TO ME?**

Nothing bad will happen to you. This is meant to be fun. If you want to stop taking part in the research at any time, you can. You can tell me whenever you want to stop. No one will be mad at you, and you won't be in any trouble if you do. This will not affect your marks in any way.

### **CAN ANYTHING GOOD HAPPEN TO ME?**

I want you to have fun!

### **WILL ANYONE KNOW I AM IN THE STUDY?**



The other children in the study will know that you are in the study. I will not use your name or your family's name in my paper, and will keep any information that you do not want shared safe.

### **WHO CAN I TALK TO ABOUT THE STUDY?**

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact me, the researcher, Donlisha Moahi, at cell: +267 71203062 or at work +267 3922188 (Gaborone), or my supervisor, Professor Elmarie Costandius at +27 82 510 9790 or at work +27 21 808 3053, Department of Visual Arts, Stellenbosch University.

### **WHAT IF I DO NOT WANT TO DO THIS?**

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

Do you understand this research study and are you willing to take part in it?

YES

NO

Has the researcher answered all your questions?

YES

NO

Do you understand that you can STOP being in the study at any time?

YES

NO

---

Signature of learner

---

Date

## Appendix E: Reflections of researcher

In this section I include my own reflections on the issues raised by the data. I am doing so because my own experiences were echoing those of the learners.

Learner B67, in her reflection and in one of the semi-structured interview, stated that her sculpture was a suicidal person who was tired of being picked on by other learners. For other learners, this artwork was just a girl with a rope, but for her it revealed a deeper issue at hand. She was a soft-spoken girl, very quiet and kept to herself a lot. She scored very high marks in most of her subjects. I read her reflection and when I spoke to her, she expressed how tired she was of the situation. After this reflection exercise, because I was not prepared for such an issue, I referred her to the guidance and counselling teacher for assistance. I remember wondering how many learners had passed through my classes with similar issues before. I had taught many children before this and I do not remember taking the time to find out how they were doing. Superficially, yes, I had inquired, but without any follow-up. I wondered just how many broken children I had probably punished for failing a test or disrupting my class, when all they actually needed was someone to listen to them and assist where possible. I acknowledge that I will not be able to solve every situation, but I could have tried and assisted. I had gone through a whole year with her, beaten<sup>28</sup> her for not doing my assignments, sleeping in class and occasionally for being too quiet and not participating during the lesson – only to finally realise that she was suicidal and I could have aggravated the situation because I didn't take the time to find out more about her circumstances. Since I had referred the issue to the counselling department, her parents have become involved and she has received the assistance she required.

I am aware that change does not happen overnight but for her, in her third year, one could see a difference in her stature. She communicated more with other learners and occasionally brought a friend to the art room during lunch time. In this instance, art became a platform for her to voice her situation, one which other learners could also be going through. Because

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<sup>28</sup> Although officially, the school head is the only person allow to beat learners, it is acceptable for teachers in government schools to administer corporal punishment as long as they follow the regulations. However, there are strict regulations that need to be followed. A learner may not get more than five strokes from a teacher, the stick must be one metre or less in length and not more than a centimetre in thickness. For example, male teachers cannot beat girls on their buttocks, only on their hands. Female teachers can administer corporal punishment on the buttocks for both boys and girls.

learners do not have opportunities to discuss such issues, they might go unnoticed. Art facilitated in revealing her psychological status. Without the opportunity given to learners to make art for a specific purpose and not for the sake of art making, to discuss their artworks in class or through reflections, I would not have noticed some of the deeper issues the learners had. Previously, the projects the learners did were for the development of the technical skills learners needed to acquire. I would have instructed the learners to make an action sculpture based on a favourite sport, demonstrate the stages involved and ask them to continue. However, with the hope of creating a safe space for critical engagement, there was room to discuss artwork, reflect on issues affecting the learners through the medium of sculpture and compare interpretations of issues that learners were dealing with through the visual medium. Where previously I would have asked learners to work independently, I encouraged interaction and teamwork. The product was not the end goal, as the thinking process together with the art processes involved were just as important as their psychological states both at the beginning and at the end of the project work. Most of the learners have no trust in the system in dealing with these power relation struggles, with the result that either they accept their place of being oppressed or never report issues or they turn into bullies themselves (e.g. C1 and BF9, respectively). Verbal bullying was more prevalent among the learners. What was interesting in this study is the way learners were willing to provide information on how teachers ignored and at times provided a conducive environment for bullying to happen.

As learners discussed instances where teachers also enable bullying, I realised for me bullying had a different meaning. Physical execution of pain was bullying to me, not consciously choosing to ignore a child in class for bad behaviour. In one of my many conversations with a friend, she brought it to my attention that ignoring a learner in class could also be a way to discriminate against a learner. During one of the lessons, a boy had spoken and acted very rudely to me as he came into the art room. I decided that until he apologised, he did not exist in my class. I continued with my lesson and many more lessons that followed not acknowledging his presence. I reprimanded those around him and if he slept, I left him to do so. In hindsight, I realised my reaction was not about what he had done to me, rather it was a trigger towards what had happened earlier in school: new student teachers had arrived during that week. During their introduction, one member of staff had made it a point to let

the new teachers know that I was Mrs Moahi, the only *mokwerekwere* from Kanye in the school. She had stressed the fact that I was from Zimbabwe, but married to a Motswana, hence the name. As always, I had laughed it off, opted to speak in English and left. Alone in my art class, I wondered why I was the only one whose origin had to be pointed out to the student teachers coming to join the school. She had not given the details of where the other married teachers originated from or their home villages, only mine. What was the intention and what were the student teachers expected to do now that they knew I was a 'second-grade citizen'? Issues of disrespect and discrimination occurred to me. This was already a few years into my PhD studies, and I should have known better to stand up for myself. The anger in me rose. Having traced from where my reaction to the boy's rude comments originated, I could have dealt with it by myself and moved on, but I used the situation in the class to vent my anger. I projected on him the same pain I was trying to work through in my research. I had deliberately misrecognised him; obliterated him into almost non-existence. Because politics of belonging revolves around identity and the self-images that individuals have, the source of oppression as misrecognition or lack of recognition becomes one of the worst forms of bullying that a teacher can inflict upon learners. I felt angry for being misrepresented by a colleague, yet I had not found it painful to inflict similar pain on a learner. This revelation in myself was an important part of my own learning; I am not separate from my research. I was investigating the learners in my class but I also started to investigate myself. I realised that the reason I am interested in this topic was my own pain of being marginalised in my own teaching context. I had opened a wound in myself in this research while I was desperately trying to create a safe space for the marginalised learners in my class. After my discussion with my supervisor, I did acknowledge the learner's presence in class. However, despite involving him, I realised he hesitated and seemed as though he weighed up whether my intentions were true. He had initially given up the subject, but had since gained momentum and wished to do more artwork than the rest of his classmates, as though he is acting out of fear more than respect.

My research process was therefore a very demanding process, a process during which I encountered pain, pleasure, victory, defeat, doubt and happiness. I realised how the data that I collected resonate with issues I struggle with myself. During this process, I recognised the dangers embedded in researching issues close to oneself. For this reason, the research

required the development of rigorous discipline where I needed to consciously forget issues of myself and try to be as objective as possible. The research for both my learners and me became a way to find ways to voice out, through art, issues of marginalisation, labelling and discrimination located within the spaces of teaching and learning – a space for those who are trying to fight the oppression and inequalities that exist within schools, institutions and society. It is not a reaction of passion of justice and equity, but rather, as Sardar (2008:vii) accurately puts it, is “an anger borne out of grinding experience, painfully long self-analysis, and even longer thought and reflection. As such, it is a guarded anger, directed at a specific, long-term desire”.

Because as individuals, issues that we are going through always find a way to come to the surface and influence our actions, in another incident, I had reacted to a comment a learner made during a lesson. When I finished speaking, I was well aware the learner was not responding to the assignment or me, rather he was talking to one of his classmates, yet I still took offense in reference to the statement he made. Oblivious to what their discussion was, but because all I heard was “*Heela moZimbabwe ke wena o batla go ntena waitse didimala*”, which translates to “You Zimbabwean, you want to infuriate me! Be quiet”, I stared at the learner and asked him why he insulted me, because the statement in Setswana evokes or implies disgust and feelings of superiority on the part of the speaker. As I stared him down and questioned him, asking who did he think he was and whether he hated me for being a Zimbabwean, in which case he could ask for a transfer rather than insulting me, I noticed the learner had gone silent and started frantically begging for forgiveness, trying to make me realise that he was referring to his classmate: “*I am sorry Ma’am but I was talking to that boy; he always calls me ‘motogo’ [porridge] and I call him moZimbabwe*”.

The infuriating part of the situation was that the boy he was talking to was from Kanye, my home village. So, to me then, indeed, it felt like he was talking to me. In a moment of fury, I had asked him to stand at the door for the rest of the lesson and for the next lesson, his parents needed to have come, or I would not teach him. Upon reflection after the lesson, I could not justify my actions, but all I knew was that the foreignness in me was fuming and very angry. This means that naturalised citizens like myself will always be haunted by the potential inferiority of authentic belonging, of being a Botswana citizen through legal citizenship or citizenship by birth. As Nyamnjoh (2016:16) asserts, “even where citizenship is



granted to mobile outsiders, the emphasis is in official documentation or ‘original country of birth’”. I knew taking it to the administration would probably not yield any results, as some of the teachers still made comments about my being a *mokwerekwere* or Zimbabwean, despite my having naturalised more than 12 years ago.

As in many African countries, English in Botswana is perceived as a personal asset and a social status marker (Bagwasi, 2003). It is seen as status symbol that most black parents are prepared to break their budget to ensure that their children attend prestigious English-medium schools. I am no exception to this. My mother did all she could to make sure that I attended an all-girls Group A, English-medium high school (in Zimbabwe) back when I started high school. She did not have a steady job and at times I would miss school because my fees were not paid. I remember being so excited about going to an English-medium school. I was finally going to be able to learn to speak like a proper English person. I had always envied some of my church mates who had an English accent and admired how they pronounced words. This took me less than a term, and my uncle commented on my accent and pronunciation. Now, if one knows the typical Zimbabwean accent and the way we pronounced the word ‘dollar’, for instance, back in the 90s, my uncle’s imitation of how I was now pronouncing it made me feel like I had won a million-dollar prize. I recall him commenting on how I had turned into a ‘nose brigade’ (a person who speaks through her nose trying to imitate the way English people sound). I walked with my head up high and I made my mother proud as I went on to study English at college, although eventually my interest diverted to art. I sacrificed Shona to do art because in my mind, Shona would not take me anywhere. I thought as long as I have English, I could do anything – a mentality that I carried into my marriage as well.

By the time I had my first child, I knew the type of school he would attend. By the time my son was ready for school, we took him to the best English-medium school we could find. What made his situation worse was that I was now in a different country where I could not speak the native language, so he learnt English as his first language. At the time, I thought we had done him justice. Most people envied him that he spoke English, but now I realise how much I betrayed him by not giving him the chance to learn and master his mother tongue (although I am not sure what it would have been, Shona or Setswana). I see how he struggles to connect with family members who cannot speak English. He finds himself feeling like an outsider when

among his cousins at family functions. As Bagwasi (2003:214) notes: “Language is not only a medium of communication but it is also a medium by which the identity, culture as well as social and economic status of the speaker is conveyed”. Although we laugh about it together and proclaim ourselves the ‘*makgowas*’ (whites) of the family, I cannot help but wonder what is really going on inside him, especially when his sister code-switches from English to Setswana with such ease. With my daughter things were different. Although she went to the same primary school as her brother, by the time she started high school I had been at my university for six years with a master’s in Visual Art. I had studied about the power of language, about internalised racism and stereotypes. I realised and acknowledged that I was a product of the colonial period. Growing up, I had internalised the injustices that I did not know existed. Therefore, for my daughter, I took a conscious decision that she would learn Setswana and Shona, if possible, before English. So, by the time she was five she was teaching me Setswana and spoke a little Shona. Unlike her brother, whom we decided would not write the Grade 7 Setswana examination, she wrote the subject. My son’s education started at one of the prestigious English-medium schools from preschool to Form 5 (Grade 12/Matric). By the time we decided he should take up Setswana as a subject, the damage had already been done. I had cultivated in him that it was not important and so he had a terrible attitude towards the subject. For my daughter’s junior high school after primary, we took her to a Tswana-medium government school. In terms of belonging and interaction with others, she never struggles and when I look at them together, she seems better equipped around family members and our community at large.